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Exploring Interactions in Migrant Integration

*Connecting Policy, Research and Practice Perspectives
on Recognition, Empowerment, Participation and
Belonging*

Andrew Orton

Abstract

This report considers foundation elements for an integrative approach to developing migrants' personal confidence and strengthening social cohesion. It builds an approach based on connecting themes of belonging, recognition, participation and interaction, proposing a four phase process to achieve this. This process focuses on creating a supportive and welcoming policy context, creating spaces and opportunities for positive interaction between migrants and others in local communities, exploring ways to build a sense of belonging and shared identity between those involved, and addressing the challenges which may inhibit progress. Particular attention is paid to evidence from a range of research fields relating to the nature of those activities, processes and spaces which support interaction, participation and integration to take place. Understanding the multi-faceted and multi-layered nature of identity is found to be particularly crucial in building belonging and relationships between different communities. Critically exploring the everyday practice challenges and dilemmas of those involved in this work offers the potential to develop collective understanding and effectiveness of this work further.

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Introduction

1. This report identifies several foundation elements for developing migrants' personal confidence and strengthening social cohesion, and explores the relationships between them. It has been produced as an advisory paper for the European Committee on Migration (CDMG) within the Council of Europe, in order to support them in developing policy guidelines for an innovative approach which will aid the empowerment and integration of migrants. The proposed approach is based on themes of belonging, recognition, participation and interaction, considering both bonding and bridging elements of these processes. A separate policy document (Orton, 2010) is available as a companion volume which summarises this approach and develops the implications for policy-makers and practitioners. A central theme in both documents is how a clearer focus on interactions can help to significantly deepen current integration policy and practice. This applies both in terms of the interactions between different dimensions of integration policy, and in terms of the everyday interactions that contribute or detract from migrants' integration.

2. This report provides an accessible introduction to key aspects of existing research on this topic, within a framework that draws together existing principles and research in relation to the topic in a creative way. These combined principles provide a basis for prompting further reflection on dealing with the policy and practice dilemmas which often arise when trying to implement this work. A primary focus will be connecting the broader debates about migration and integration with evidence from those projects and practitioners who attempt to deal with these issues and policies in the context of relationships in local communities.

Migration and Integration: A Contemporary Policy Conundrum

3. An increase in migration has been an important feature of a globalizing world, both in terms of the numbers of people moving and the complexity of the different flows of people (e.g. see Penninx et al, 2008; Bonifazi et al, 2008; European Commission, 2009). These flows have raised a wide range of related issues for migrants and the communities affected by their movement, not least in terms of how migrants relate to existing local communities. Particular concerns have been raised in Europe (as well as elsewhere) about the difficulties and inequalities facing migrants which inhibit their integration. These include differential experiences in various spheres of their life such as employment, income, housing, health, nutrition, education,

information, and culture (CDMG Committee of Experts on Integration and Diversity, 2004). In turn, this has highlighted the need for co-ordinated approaches which promote integration and social cohesion in this context, drawing on research in this field (e.g. Taran, 2008). However, migration has proved a highly controversial issue both within and between states, particularly in terms of what approaches should be taken to promote the integration and empowerment of migrants:

“States differ considerably in their approaches, programmes and political priorities towards the integration of migrants ... There are indeed a variety of images, stereotypes and philosophies on what immigrant integration should or should not be.” (Carrera, 2005:5)

4. Migrants’ presence and movement can be catalysts for highlighting broader political issues relating to the distribution of resources and the underlying socio-political and legal framework for managing diversity within communities, as well as providing one contributing factor towards this diversity. This diversity also raises fundamental questions about cultures, identities and nationalities, and the relationships between them (Papastergiadis, 2000).

5. Extensive research on various aspects of this field has proliferated, alongside multiple policy frameworks and practical responses. However, despite these responses, the integration and empowerment of migrants (and related socio-economic cohesion issues) remain a difficult conundrum for all those involved. Whilst there has been some progress in sharing current understandings of the issues, there remain substantial perceived limitations to existing approaches in practice (see, for example, Jandl, 2007). In addition, the relationship between research and policy-making in this field has been far from smooth (Penninx and Scholten, 2009). Wide-ranging reviews of the current state of research on migration and integration issues have highlighted potential weaknesses in the existing evidence base:

“The most obvious weakness of European research on migration and integration issues is that it is fragmented. Three forms of fragmentation are regularly brought up: lack of comparative research, lack of co-operation between disciplines and lack of integration of the different levels at which phenomena are studied” (Penninx et al, 2008:8)

6. This has been further complicated by the difficult relationship between research, policy-making and the wider media on these issues. In the current context, “much of the reporting on migration in Europe is done in a reactive

way, responding to negative ‘scare’ stories which link migration to perceived security threats, health dangers, economic problems and so on” (European Commission, 2009:36). Despite this, alongside more co-ordinated and independent research, the media could potentially play an essential role in:

“informing public debate and enabling civil society to monitor the effects of policy on society. Without this public involvement, what actually happens is ‘policy-based evidence-making’. What we know about migration, the data and knowledge we use, is often the result, not the determinant, of policy aims.” (European Commission, 2009:35)

7. This ‘policy-based evidence-making’ arises when policy-makers selectively pick only those aspects of research which evidence their pre-chosen policies, and tend to fund those studies operating within this paradigm. This can result in a loss of potential learning from a broader range of research (including those studies which raises questions about current policy approaches) to inform how these policies might be more effective.

This project seeks to respond to this context and the resulting conundrums through an approach which will now be outlined.

Rationale / Approach

8. The structure of this report provides an evidenced basis for subsequent debate by progressively focusing on the actual local activities, spaces and interactions within which migrants and wider communities relate. This approach explores the relationship between different levels of analysis by connecting them together in a multidisciplinary way that is rooted in local actions whilst recognising the wider structural, social and political context. By making these connections, the report aims to open up fresh ways of exploring and responding to the limitations and challenges outlined.

9. This project connects together a very extensive range of topics, each of which has a considerable existing depth of existing research. Hence, the focus of the report will not be on providing a comprehensive breakdown of all research on each topic, as this would be impossible in the space provided. Instead, the report focuses on providing an accessible synthesis of key theoretical points, supported by relevant research evidence, in order to consider the implications for policy and practice in terms of how they connect together.¹

¹ In the process of doing so, it has not always been possible to enter into a detailed critique of any particular source used in terms of its perspective or evidence base, especially given the controversial nature of many of the topics under discussion. The synthesis of the literature critically draws together a range of perspectives having applied an appropriate academic quality standard, without necessarily implying that this author agrees with the entirety of all

10. To do this, the report is structured around an initial conceptual framework which links existing research findings together as part of a phased approach to achieving greater empowerment, interaction and integration of migrants. These phases are comprised as follows:

- *Phase 1:* The public and policy environment – creating an environment which is welcoming to migrants and removes barriers to their empowerment and integration into local communities.
- *Phase 2:* Encouraging interaction between migrants and others in local communities through participation, empowerment and the development of shared spaces/opportunities.
- *Phase 3:* Building a sense of belonging and shared identity to achieve integration.
- *Phase 4:* Addressing the challenges which may inhibit progress.

11. The underlying rationale behind this structure is that (at Phase 1) certain contextual factors have a significant pre-encounter impact on the likelihood of positive interaction taking place. These contextual factors include immigration processes, prevalent media messages, the extent to which the positive contributions of migrants are recognised in the receiving society and the pre-existing personal experiences/attitudes/skills held by both migrants and receiving communities.

12. In Phase 2, those attempting to encourage greater interaction between migrants and existing resident populations then use a range of methods to actively create the potential for encounter. These methods might include developing confidence and skills (including language skills) which might help intercultural encounter, the creation of shared spaces and opportunities for processes where interaction is encouraged, and the development of schemes to encourage civic participation by migrants. Overall, the focus of this phase is on how both migrants and receiving communities can be empowered to engage in positive interactions with each other.

13. If such opportunities and activities are to enable shared senses of belonging to be built amongst both migrants and the pre-existing resident populations, then fleeting encounters between these groups by themselves

the sources cited. Similarly, the later empirical use of individual practitioner perspectives does not necessarily imply the author's agreement with the views stated. In considering the range of views and evidence overall, the argument developed in this report cumulatively highlights an approach for critically considering how these issues might relate together to empower migrants' participation, interaction, belonging and integration. This argument is complemented by reflecting the questions and perspectives relating to this approach which were raised by the particular group of practitioners involved in the conference in their own words.

may not be enough. Phase 3 considers how these encounters may be developed to build common senses of belonging. This involves more intensive exchanges whereby people come together through the opportunities and shared spaces created at Phase 2 and use these to find common ground and shared values, as well as potentially to explore their differences. A key consideration within this phase will be how processes can be developed which enable participants to integrate new, wider senses of self in terms of their own identity and community, recognising the positive contributions brought by all.

14. Phase 4 recognises that this process is by no means inevitable. Significant barriers, issues and dilemmas can confront those who try to help people participate through this integration and empowerment process. By considering those barriers, issues and dilemmas which arise in practice, potential limitations in existing policy and research are highlighted, and creative responses to these issues explored. This phase will focus on how to move the existing policy and practice debate forwards, by taking into account those areas of practice which are often problematic. By discussing those areas of practice which create the most difficulties, ideas concerning 'good practice' can be explored critically. This can include enabling the reasons why particular approaches work differently in different settings to be investigated. Examples of common difficulties and dilemmas include what responses might be made by those seeking to empower and integrate migrants when the cultures of migrants do not fit comfortably with those of existing residents.

15. A central contention of this report is that each of these phases requires the others in order to maximise the potential for success in integrating and empowering migrants. As the report develops, the various links between the phases are explored, showing how later phases build on and deepen those which come before.

16. The focus of this report has been integration, and re-integration in the case of circular migration has not been separately considered. There is further work to be done to consider the extent to which these principles may or may not be relevant to re-integration. However, some of the same principles may be useful to consider in this context, in terms of each move and settling-in process undertaken by migrants, including on their return to their countries of origin. Identities, outlooks, and the way that migrants are received within these different settings can all be potentially changed by their experiences of migration, affecting related feelings of belonging. A policy approach which encourages diverse positive interactions across communities in an ongoing way may have something to offer in terms of building re-integration and

sharing the learning from these different experiences, although this is an area which would require further research.

17. Methodologically, this report builds on approaches to critically exploring good practice which enables meaningful interactions across different groups in local communities in England, as applied by the author in work with the National Community Forum (Orton 2009). This prior work has been acknowledged as making a significant contribution to related UK Government guidance (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2009b).

18. In order to explore the connections between theory and practice, a “Conference on interaction between migrants and their host societies: Learning from policy and practice” was held in Barcelona on 16th – 17th October 2009. This conference drew together 35 experts from across Europe who had practical experience of addressing these issues in a range of different contexts in addition to the organisers², translators³ and visiting speakers. The experts were chosen on the basis of responses to a call for participants circulated by the European Committee on Migration and the Migration Division of the Council of Europe. This call for participants included a specification detailing the required experience and expertise for those who were interested in attending. Participants were selected based on these criteria from amongst those who expressed an interest in response to this call.

19. At the conference, a range of interactive methods were used to draw on their experience and generate collective learning on the issues. These were facilitated by an external consultant, Long Litt Woon (Norway). These discussions were informed by short presentations by Andrew Orton, introducing some key concepts from previous research, based on an earlier version of this report. These were also informed by examples of how these issues had been managed in the context of Spain and the host city of Barcelona, through presentations from:

- (i) Estrella Rodriguez (Director General of Integration of Immigrants, Ministry of Labour and Immigration);
- (ii) Daniel de Torres Barderi (Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, City of Barcelona);

² The conference was organised by a team from the City of Barcelona (Daniel de Torres Barderi, Carolina Astudillo Beals, Puri Moreno Calvo) and the Migration Division of the Council of Europe (Simon Tonelli, Sergey Khrychikov, Agnès Reading).

³ Translation was provided between French and English languages throughout the conference by Danielle Gree and Anne Lepreux.

- (iii) Ricard Zapata-Barrero (Associate Professor, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona);
- (iv) Carles Marti (Deputy Major, City of Barcelona).

20. Whilst these presentations provided an initial stimulus for the discussions, they were presented in such a way as to provoke active reflection and critical questioning by the participants. As a result, this report provides an analysis which combines theory and practice in a creative and integrated way, whilst remaining clear about the sources of each contribution (whether previous research, policy documents or reflections from practitioners gathered empirically through the conference).

21. Each of the proposed phases will now be considered in turn. Each phase is considered in a separate section, beginning with an initial summarised discussion that introduces some relevant theory and research. This is followed by the critical reflections and perspectives from practical experience generated through the interactive conference process relating to that phase. Together, these form the basis for the policy and practice approach outlined in the companion volume (Orton, 2010).

Phase 1: The Public and Policy Environment

22. The first phase of this process considers how national, regional and local authorities can create an environment that is favourable to positive interactions between migrants and local communities.

23. This report has already begun to highlight the importance of creating a supportive public and policy context for integration. This has increasingly been recognised in recent years, forming an important focus for policy and research in individual countries, across Europe and more widely (European Commission, 2009; Penninx et al, 2008). The Council of Europe has made its own pioneering contributions to this process (Rosenow, 2009), not least through their earlier work on community relations.⁴

24. The proliferation of research on this topic has reflected diverse experiences at local and national levels, with different areas being affected by different policies, migrant flows and practices. This existing research has also shown the importance of recognising the complexity of migration processes and statuses. This is further complicated by the increasingly transnational nature of life for many migrants and the changing meanings of borders and statuses to those involved in increasingly complex (and often recurring) processes of transition (European Commission, 2009). For example, Penninx et al (2008:3-4) highlight how:

“The relationship between migration and the forms of settlement has also shifted. While in the past, migration tended to be viewed predominantly as a ‘one-off’ movement leading to permanent resettlement (a concept prevailing in classical immigration countries), recent migration, supported by strongly increased transport and communication facilities, has shifted to more fluid practices of international mobility in which more migrants have consecutive stays in different countries, and alternate their residence between countries. This has lead to some new practices of residence, integration and community formation.”

25. Related research studies have increasingly been brought together (i) through research projects that compare national policy contexts and responses to these changing circumstances; and (ii) through multiple research networks and forums for policy exchange which have developed as a result (e.g. see

⁴ One example of this contribution is reflected in Recommendation No. R (92) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on community relations.

European Commission, 2009 for links to some key networks and larger research projects). These mechanisms have shown how:

“A wide range of programmes intending to promote and facilitate the integration processes of lawful migrants have been put in place in a majority of EU states. These programmes tend to include, for example, language abilities, orientation courses that familiarise migrants with the receiving country’s norms, values and cultural customs.” (Carrera, 2005:6)

26. A broad range of practical examples can be found on websites such as the ‘European Website on Integration’⁵. The importance of introducing certain basic prerequisites for enabling integration such as language training for immigrants has been widely recognised.⁶ These have frequently been complemented by various other approaches to designing introduction programmes and enabling civic participation (see Niessen and Schibel, 2004 for a summary of findings from these).

27. As Carrera (2005:6) notes, such programmes vary widely in terms of scope, target groups and actors, as well as content and structure; he argues that this “diversity derives from the different historical backgrounds, societal models and self-perception, along with the patterns and traditions of migration flows in each state”.

28. Beyond particular initiatives, theorists have recognised a range of dimensions in which states have increasingly adopted national integration measures. For example, Carrera (2005:6) argues that current integration activity focuses on three dimensions:

“the socio-economic dimension, which may include priority areas such as access to the labour market, education, housing and health; the legal/political dimension, which refers to the question of the extent to which immigrants are effectively members of a political community in their receiving state; and the cultural/religious dimension, which relates to the cultural and religious rights of immigrants.”

29. Bauböck (2003) phrases these dimensions in terms of conditions which are necessary for societies experiencing immigration if they are to integrate immigrants, namely equal opportunities, legal equality, cultural toleration and recognition. For example, in the socio-economic dimension, countries

⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/index.cfm> ; this website “aims to provide policy makers and practitioners working on integration in Europe with a tool for the exchange of information and good practice on integration across Europe.”

⁶ The precise role and contribution of language training in the host country’s primary language/s, and its relationship to issues of whether languages spoken by ethnic minorities should be recognised, remain contested; e.g. see Bauböck, 2003, p.43-48.

have adopted a range of policy tools to mainstream immigrant integration processes over a wide range of policy fields. These have included changes intended to support key areas of integration such as access to housing and economic integration into the labour market, with the primary aim of eliminating inequalities to improve migrants' outcomes (Niessen and Schibel, 2007). Enabling migrants to access work (alongside other opportunities to participate in education, social and political life) is recognised as particularly important; as Dayton-Johnson et al (2007) state:

“[providing] fair and equal access to labour market at earliest point in the immigration experience for all migrants and their families; economic integration is the surest determinant of social integration”.⁷

30. Alongside these dimensions of integration, comparative consideration has also been given to issues of entry requirements and criteria/processes for gaining citizenship, as well as their potential impact on cohesion (see, for example, Federal Ministry of the Interior/Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008). Overall, this phase of integration reflects what Bosswick and Heckmann (2006:9) call 'structural integration'. This aspect of integration is a significant contribution to the empowerment of migrants through the process of achieving an “acquisition of rights and the access to position and status in the core institutions of the host society: the economy and labour market, education and qualification systems, the housing system, welfare state institutions (including the health system), and full political citizenship” (Bosswick and Heckmann, 2006:9; also see Engbersen, 2003). These dimensions also reflect common responses to the question of what integration means, summarised by Niessen and Schibel (2007:8) as including “social and economic mobility, education, health, housing, social services, and societal participation”.

31. As policy debates and practical exchanges on these issues have proliferated, they have increasingly led to what Rosenow (2009) argues to be a “Europeanisation of integration policies”. This has occurred as national governments and European institutions have collaborated over migration issues and connected these to broader issues of rights and social/economic cohesion. These agreed understandings have been consolidated at this European level through agreement on 'A Common Agenda for Integration' (Commission of the European Communities, 2005) and principles for integrated policies as developed at the 8th ministerial conference (see Taran, 2008). The agreed approach emphasises the importance of policy action at EU

⁷ A specific range of resources relating to involving migrants in work, including a database of practice approaches, has been compiled by the International Labour Organization, and can be found at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/equality/index.htm>.

and national levels to address integration issues, building on nine common basic principles:

- “1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States. ...
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union. ...
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible. ...
4. Basic knowledge of the host society’s language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration. ...
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society. ...
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration. ...
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, intercultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens. ...
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law. ...
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.” (Commission of the European Communities, 2005:5-10)

32. This process has also been supported by two further principles on mainstreaming and evaluation (Commission of the European Communities, 2005:11-12), the development of a wide range of shared resources such as Handbooks on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners (Niessen and Schibel, 2004; 2007) and the establishment of the network of National Contact Points on Integration arising out of the work of the Immigration and Asylum Committee of the European Commission. Other significant resources include the *European Website on Integration*, which includes a library of policy/research

papers and practice examples in these fields⁸. This has enabled a broad range of practice examples from local projects to be shared, often by their originators or others in their country, as examples of 'good practice'.

33. However, despite this developing agreement on key aspects of related policy, there are continuing challenges in achieving widespread integration, participation and empowerment to the depth desired. There is considerable evidence that many European countries' national policies still have a long way to go in creating favourable environments for integration even on the basis of these recognised principles. For example, Niessen et al (2007) provide a measure of the extent to which different countries have yet to meet recognised principles across the key policy areas of labour market access, family reunion, long-term residence, political participation, access to nationality and anti-discrimination⁹.

34. These difficulties of implementation highlight the need for political support from elected leaders and a willingness to treat this policy area as a strategic priority with a co-ordinated plan that generates wider public backing. The European Commission *Handbook on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners* describes this in the following way:

"Investing in building and maintaining an integration governance structure is well worth the effort as it helps to develop an integration vision and strategy, generate resources, mobilise people and organisations, forge partnerships and build trust, all being crucially important for the achievement of short and longer term integration goals. ... Local integration policies are more effective when they build on the support of the whole community. Rather than being directed at migrants only, they relate to all residents as well as the administration itself. Often, they require real changes across a number of departments and fields of municipal action. Political backing is therefore essential." (Niessen and Schibel, 2007:87)

35. As well as policy initiatives, this highlights the importance of the broader public environment into which migrants are received. Public attitudes towards migration and immigrants can have a significant effect on the degree of welcome experienced, not least in terms of any personal or structural discrimination experienced and the degree to which migrants feel

⁸ The library organised under themes of active citizenship, economic participation, social cohesion, education and culture, anti-discrimination and equality, and tools and techniques; see <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/resources/index.cfm> . For practice examples from the same source, see <http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/practice/index.cfm> .

⁹ The summary at <http://www.integrationindex.eu/topics/2636.html> is particularly helpful in this regard.

that their contribution to the receiving society is recognised and respected (Entzinger and Biezeveld, 2003). As Entzinger and Biezeveld highlight, a range of factors can contribute to existing and changing public attitudes, not least media coverage. Bauböck (2003) extends this further to include an “inclusive and pluralistic public culture” as an additional condition for successful immigrant integration. In Bauböck’s view, it is important to develop a shared means of communicating, a repertoire of collective memories and identity (which includes immigrants), a set of explicit and implicit norms and values regulating political conflict and decision-making, and a set of implicit norms and styles of behaviour that are broadly shared across different communities in society. However, the precise form that this cultural recognition might take is particularly contentious, as this report will shortly consider in more detail.

36. At this stage, it is simply important to note that broad issues of culture and cultural policy are increasingly being recognised as being significant to the recognition and integration of migrants. There are significant calls to take this area of EU policy more seriously in terms of the contribution it could make in this arena (Xuereb, 2009).

37. This phase has focused on policy frameworks, as these create the environment (for good or ill) in which local interactions and integration may or may not take place. Particular consideration has been given to structural policies and programmes which set the environment in which immigrants are received and the degree to which these prove to be welcoming and empowering. The nature of the particular local spaces and mechanisms that enable interaction to take place, and the relationship between the dimensions highlighted so far at a local level, are considered within the next phase. Before exploring these, the perspectives of the expert practitioners attending the conference on the Phase 1 issues discussed so far shall be considered.

Perspectives from Practice

38. Practitioner views explored during the Barcelona conference broadly agreed with the themes summarised from the wider research, highlighting the particular impact of the following factors within their own practice experience:

1. Citizenship Rights

39. Participants emphasised the need for the policy environment to ensure migrants were included in basic aspects of citizenship such as the opportunity to be involved in the labour market and “the right to vote”. In practice, however, this does not always happen; as more than one participant

recognised, migrants face complex “bureaucratic legislative obstacles” to their integration, especially when “the legal status of international migrants is fragile mostly due to strict regulations and red tape”. This can cause difficulties based on a “lack of stable residence status of migrants and not transparent, inconsistent and unreliable rules for admission and integration”. This is particularly problematic for those migrants who are in transition, especially where (i) “Legal procedures for acquiring relevant status takes too long, and during that time a migrant is not allowed to work” and remains in “legal limbo”; (ii) “asylum seekers and persons who are in a regularisation procedure are prohibited to work ([whether in a] paid [or] voluntary [capacity]!)”. Another participant indicated that this may “push them to illegal work activities”. The strictly limited support provided in many states for asylum seekers whilst their claim is determined can be a significant factor in preventing the integration of this particularly vulnerable group. The integration process can start badly for this group whilst their claim is being determined, when they may have difficulties obtaining even free basic language education in some states. This bad start may continue to have negative repercussions in terms of their integration over the longer term if their claim is eventually accepted.

40. Labour market involvement and access to welfare provision were seen by many participants as being crucial for migrants’ empowerment and integration. The importance of “economic self-sufficiency – getting a job/education/skills” was considered vital in creating “the feeling of contributing”, having “skills to offer” and generating “recognition”, as well as providing opportunities for interaction through “the ability to work at a work place”.

41. In practice, both of these crucial elements were often found to be problematic for many of the groups involved:

- In terms of **labour market involvement**, even migrants who are legally eligible to work may face “discrimination on the labour market through legislation” and “structural discrimination on grounds of ethnicity and religion” and/or a “lack of integration because of an assumption that they will leave (back to [their] country of origin)”. Concerns were raised by two participants that introductory programmes may raise expectations about the availability and likelihood of securing employment which may not then be able to be fulfilled. Helpful steps which can be taken include providing appropriate career advice/mentoring and ensuring that posts in the public sector are open to those with migrant backgrounds. Those taking on these positions can be role models for other migrants, providing they are not “left as

exceptions” to a wider norm which inhibits others from applying. A combination of anti-discrimination legislation and the funding for organisations such as the Anti-Discrimination Bureau in the Netherlands can provide support and legal assistance to those who feel they have been discriminated against as well as engaging in preventative work on these issues. Participants also recognised that migrants can often face difficulties when trying to secure recognition for existing skills and qualifications gained in other countries. In response, one participant suggested that the “organisation of a round table on foreign trained professionals” could be helpful if this would lead to a wider “acceptance of diplomas and skills”.¹⁰

- In terms of **welfare provision**, the availability of welfare services and social funds early in the transition process were considered helpful in enabling early empowerment and integration. This included contributions such as “housing migrants in mixed neighbourhoods” and “universal access to education”, which were suggested as contributing towards integration. A “lack of readiness of relevant services to provide support”, an “absence of housing programs for arriving migrants” or an “absence of ‘human contact facilities’” were seen by some as undermining migrant empowerment and integration. However, these views were not without some opposition from other participants; for example, one participant saw “the fact that it is relatively easy to receive social welfare after a few years [being problematic] because this makes people inactive”. It was certainly clear that the way in which welfare provision was delivered had a significant impact on the potential of this provision to support or undermine integration. For example, cash benefits paid to parents staying at home with children may empower some migrants (along with other residents) to focus on their parenting, but may also contributing towards the isolation of the parent (usually the mother) who stays at home.

2. Language

42. The importance of migrants developing language skills in the language of the receiving country was widely recognised. “Emphasis[ing] the importance of language skills” to migrants and enabling them “to learn the language” through the provision of free “language courses” was seen as a key

¹⁰ The UK was mentioned as a positive example in this regard, as it has a national agency (NARIC) which provides advice on the equivalence of qualifications in different countries (see <http://www.naric.org.uk> for details). Internet-based information for those moving to/from the UK is available at <http://www.europeopen.org.uk>. More broadly, there is a network of designated contact points for information on the recognition of professional qualifications in other EU member states which are listed at http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/contactpoints/.

factor in migrants' empowerment and integration. In terms of initial engagement, however, "information disseminated in [the] mother tongue of migrants plays a key role" and should not be neglected. The use of interpreters may help at this initial stage, although it was noted that these are "expensive" and their use over the longer term may mean that people are "not motivated to learn [the] language".

43. The way that languages are taught can affect the potential of language provision to contribute towards integration. For example, providing a "separated class to improve Italian languages to newcomers" may help address their language learning requirements, but misses an opportunity to help integrate the migrants with others wishing to improve their Italian language skills in the process. The "traditional educational approach" taken by some language programmes was also questioned in terms of whether this approach works effectively with the groups concerned. These approaches may need restructuring to take into account the background of those involved; e.g. those who are returning to learning at an older age. For example, the language courses provided in Germany are designed with "different curricula for a general course and as well as specific courses for women, parents, young people, slow-learners and illiterate people respectively. This helps to ensure that different learners' needs are adequately addressed. Financed by the government, the integration course is carried out locally by different service providers."

44. In some settings where residents speak multiple languages, the choice of language taught can also have subtle repercussions. For example, in Malta, the "language emphasis on [teaching] English and not Maltese" may help to engage migrants who wish to learn a language that will help them in a wider range of national settings as well as in Malta. However, the participant from Malta indicated that speaking English does not break down barriers to integration in Malta in the same way that learning to speak Maltese can.

3. Broader Introductory Information & Orientation

45. This begins to illustrate how learning a language is only one element required for successful integration; indeed in situations where "first contacts only focus on legal aspects and language", this was seen as being problematic. Language training was seen as "not sufficient in itself as [it] does not guarantee access & interaction". Many of the initiatives which were perceived as being successful also included broader introductory information covering local history and culture as well as language skills. As one participant stated, this information helps people "to find a way into society, [to be] introduced to a society". Establishing broader combined introductory programmes for all migrants was seen as a key initiative that supported

migrants' empowerment and integration in the various areas where these were run (for example, in Flanders and Germany, where migrants undertake a substantial course of study "to learn about the language and society"). Other countries have adopted less formal methods; for example, by providing "complete [information] in a language they can understand, both to the migrants and to the public, including culture orientation via written brochures distributed to NGOs¹¹" and/or "advice and guidance to achieve life goals".

46. Indeed, there was considerable debate about whether these different forms of introductory programmes for social integration should be obligatory or voluntary, and which groups should attend. At least one participant saw "using a 'social police' (creating contracts)" as a positive contributor to integration. However, other participants saw the forced nature of "obligatory integration contracts with migrants" as acting as a significant barrier to integration. Stringent assessments of knowledge about particular societies (such as those required by the Dutch 'inburgering' process) were critiqued for putting "huge demands on migrants [and making] local communities have to carry out policies which are very difficult to carry out and which influence the mindset of people". In addition, obligatory contracts, tests and courses were criticised as "unclear and narrow in their view of integration, costly, exclusionary, and ineffective", as well as failing to take into account the power differences between those involved. The need for flexibility within all programmes was reinforced, whether these were obligatory or voluntary. Approaches which focused on "support and transcultural guidelines" were seen as positive contributors to empowerment and integration, whereas "non-participatory projects" were seen as undermining them.

47. However this information was conveyed, there was broad agreement that providing basic language training for migrants and introductory information about the receiving societies' culture was important for their empowerment and integration. Opening this provision up in ways which also include "oldcomers" (i.e. people who have already been in the country for some time) was also suggested as being a positive possibility for those who felt that they might benefit from it. One example of this that was suggested is the programme run by "Bon", an NGO based in Brussels.¹² Providing some elements of language programmes alongside free language training to existing residents may also help to achieve interaction as well as empowerment. Providing broader information on a culture may not be easy, however; one participant problematised the assumption that this could be

¹¹ NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisations

¹² <http://www.bonvzw.be/en/>

easily communicated given the diversity of cultural expressions within any particular society by asking the question “What is a host society culture?” in the context of cultural diversity within any one particular setting.

4. Welcome

48. Whilst the provision of language skills and introductory information to migrants is clearly important, many participants also emphasised the importance of the *way in which this was delivered*. Creating a sense of welcome for migrants is crucial, and a “lack of welcome strategies” / “lack of framework for reception on relevant level(s)” was critiqued as contributing towards integration problems. Participants emphasised the need to make the most of opportunities to welcome migrants, with positive factors supporting their integration including “[providing a] personal welcome to immigrants”. This can be achieved through (for example) holding a “welcome session to newcomers” or organising other “welcome initiatives ... and events”, as well as modifying the general way that accompanying reception processes are dealt with. Strict immigration criteria and the accompanying bureaucratic processes can often be perceived by migrants as hostile, and create an impression of lack of welcome from the outset. “Negative media” and “public opinion” were widely recognised as creating perceptions of an unfriendly welcome for migrants. This applied especially when “private media reporting on migration issues [aims] to create a sensation” and public attitudes at best show a “passive” tolerance of “foreigners”. When added to the stress of relocation, this can be an intensely traumatic period for those migrating, and several participants recognised the need to “reduce [the] levels of stress [that] newcomers are faced with” by providing “initial support” during this period of transition. For example, one participant mentioned a “programme of support and accompaniment of reunited families and youth” which had been established by a local authority in response to this need.

49. These issues of appropriate welcome do not just apply to migrants integrating into a country for the first time. Countries like Armenia face issues resettling their own nationals who return after living in other countries for several years. The provision of support to welcome migrants back in such countries may be undertaken by the national government in difficult socio-economic circumstances.

5. Co-ordination and Organisation of Services at National/Local Levels

50. Participants emphasised the need for a “**coherent strategic framework** on all ... levels of government” and good relationships between them in dealing with issues of migrant empowerment and integration. “**Effective information** [from] authorities on all levels [of] government directed at migrants” was recognised as being crucial by many participants; this included

“when they are arriving the first thing is to inform them where to go or call”. A positive example of this in the case of reintegration is the consultation centre established at the Migration Agency in Armenia, which has been able to support over 3,000 cases in 2 ½ years. This centre has established focal points within a range of different government agencies so that it can provide co-ordinated support on issues such as documentation, employment, military service, legal issues, health problems, education, social issues, housing and other queries. In some cases, they can also provide further financial assistance with starting a business, training, education for children, medical assistance or psychological/social counselling.

51. **Communication and co-ordination between services** operating at a particular level (whether local, regional, national, or even international) and between these levels was highlighted as being of particular importance. Where there is a “lack of preparedness by services” or “lack of joined up working” between services and sectors (housing, employment, education, health, etc.), this was recognised as being particularly problematic. Gathering and sharing “statistical data to predict future needs” may help services to be more prepared and develop joint working procedures in advance where possible. Several participants recommended using a local process of **registering migrants** (including illegal migrants) using unique identifiers. This was seen as a helpful way to “give identity”, “enable their access to services, regardless of their legal status”, “avoid invisibility/exclusion” and “co-ordinate the activities of different ministries”. One project in a district of Barcelona has used a pre-registration process (required for those migrants who are wanting to bring other members of their family to the local area) to provide additional support to these families. For example, they offer support with finding a “school for the kids, or the new family financial perspective, after school activities while the parents works, health care, help to prepare the newcomer for the language and the culture, etc.”. One participant also recommended “establishing co-operation between local authorities and migrants’ national groups as a part of government policy” as a way of improving this co-ordination based on migrants’ experiences.

52. Many participants expressed concerns about a **lack of political leadership** on issues relating to migration and integration which undermined these attempts at co-ordination. In some contexts, this “lack of leadership” was felt to exist at the “state level”, with states needing “to explain that Europe is changing for ever; no longer will states be homogenous”. One participant expressed concerns that the “Specific values [promoted by states are] not easy to understand/follow/copy”. Where this leadership was lacking, integration was considered to be detrimentally affected. In other contexts, there was considered to be a lack of capacity or “lack of interest [in]

integration on the side of local government. For example, in Armenia, only national authorities were reported as having policies, and these mainly focused on reintegration rather than integration due to the main migration flows affecting that country.

53. However, there was considerable debate in terms of the best way of dividing responsibilities. In some contexts, funding controlled by central government was seen as unhelpful. In other contexts, national and provincial governments were able to provide helpful advice, support and funding to more local level activities and councils. For example, “the Diputació de Barcelona provides economic and technical support to municipalities for the design and implementation of arrival and reception local programmes” as a means of supporting migrants’ empowerment and integration.

6. Integrated or Segregated Services?

54. Participants highlighted particular difficulties in deciding whether the provision of services for migrants was best delivered through specialist services or services which were integrated with the rest of the local population. Whilst specialist services may provide opportunities to provide targeted support to migrants’ particular needs, participants generally expressed concerns that this would lead to the “alienation of ethnic minorities by special or specific policy measures”. The use of “parallel structures: measures directed at migrants in structures specially designed for migrants where there are other regulatory structures in place for residents” was particularly criticised as having the potential to undermine integration. There was particular concern about the effects of a “segregated education system”. This may sometimes be the unintentional effect of other policies such as “the right to choose which school your kids are going to” as this can lead “to segregation between schools in the city”. This has particularly detrimental effects where “educational policies ... reinforce the connection between social background and educational results”. Even where specialist services are provided for migrants, it is important that these are not based solely on their status as migrants; one country highlighted as good practice the work of their “Social services and child protection agency (national) [who have] a project to accommodate migrant children. The subject of it is the child and no other categories are important” as the child’s welfare is the paramount concern.

7. Co-ordination of Policies across Europe

55. Concerns were also expressed about the co-ordination of policies at a European level, especially within the EU. The lack of a sufficient common European framework for responding was considered problematic in a number of regards, including comments by individual participants on:

- (i) the need to control the flow of migrants within a system which “generate irregularity” because the “flow of migrants and access to Europe is not clear and very different from one country to another”;
- (ii) the effects of “non-standardized procedures of reception of legal migrants in different member states of the EU”;
- (iii) “EU regulations limiting mobility of migrants/ workforce of third country origin”;
- (iv) “(Illegal) Migrants find themselves in the country which is not a country of their wish, and once [the] relevant legal procedure has [been] initiated they are not allowed to re-unify with their family in some other receiving country”.

56. In terms of all the Phase 1 issues overall, the participant practitioners recognised the value of the increased sharing of migration policy issues and strategies across their respective countries, whilst continuing to express the need for further work to address the above seven areas of concern.

Phase 2: Encouraging Interaction

57. The impact of migration issues, and the associated national/international policy frameworks identified above in Phase 1, is felt most acutely at a local level (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2006). It is also at this more local level where various innovative responses can arise to empower migrants and facilitate their integration and interaction.

58. Local initiatives and encounters are crucial sites where the dimensions of integration highlighted at Phase 1 (such as socio-economic, legal, political, cultural/religious dimensions, etc.) are experienced in everyday life. Whilst *dimensions of integration (at a policy level)* are primarily about establishing degrees of equality, status, recognition and conditions of acceptance within the new national context, it is equally important to consider the *spaces for integration (on a local level)*. These spaces are those places where interpersonal and inter-group interaction may actually happen. Furthermore, it is also important to consider the *skills which may help people to interact positively* and the *processes for supporting positive interaction* within these spaces, especially where interaction is not necessarily happening of its own accord.¹³ All of these elements are essential for interaction and integration to take place, but they are often confused with each other within much existing literature. Even if migrants are granted full citizenship and equal rights in respect of work, access to services, etc. in the policy domain, this does not necessarily mean this will translate into positive experiences at a local level. Full rights and citizenship do not automatically mean migrants have good opportunities to build social relationships with those from different backgrounds or mean they will necessarily have good relationships with others at work, or even that they will get a job (although it is certainly likely to help).

59. As this discussion has begun to indicate, the relationship between different levels of policy-making and action can be complex: the wider social and political context clearly has a profound impact on the environment in which local interactions may or may not take place, as well as the degree to which such interactions are likely to be positive. However, there is also a need to focus more specifically on the particular local spaces and processes in which more positive forms of interaction and integration could take place,

¹³ These different elements are recognised in relation to building relations between different faith communities in Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008.

and support these to develop further. Dimensions of integration at policy level create a supportive context; spaces for interaction on a local level create opportunities; skills empower people to participate; and processes for supporting positive interaction help the most to be made of these opportunities.

Limitations of Existing Knowledge of Local Interaction Initiatives

60. As indicated above in Phase 1, a growing set of international networks are enabling examples of “good practice” to be shared as the primary method for comparing experiences of enabling participation, integration and empowerment at this local level. This sharing of particular experiences has proved a useful way of sharing ideas for particular projects. However, there are limitations to the current methods used to learn from these experiences. Details from particular local examples may not be easily transferable to a different context without a deeper and more critical consideration of their underlying principles. Examples are frequently cited as ‘good practice’ by those involved in them, and they may not necessarily have been independently analysed for evidence of their full effects, nor their wider implications. Even the emerging databases of initiatives do not necessarily enable analysis to be conducted in a cross-comparative way. By just focusing on sharing particular schemes and example projects, these databases often focus on a particular ‘project idea’ as the catalyst for bringing people together. Whilst this may be important, focusing attention in this way can miss the implicit expertise and practical wisdom of practitioners who attempt to promote integration at the community level. These practitioners may contribute particular underlying understandings which are required to make these ideas and projects work. Even systematic evaluation may miss learning from local experience in ways that grasp the significance of the understanding developed in this form of everyday experience, which may challenge existing conceptual understandings in academic and policy discourses. Furthermore, in the desire to just share ‘good’ practice examples, the valuable learning from those experiences which have had less positive effects in particular contexts can be lost. It is in this context that Robinson and Reeve (2006:39) conclude that the learning at a neighbourhood level (in a UK context) has been limited. This is indicative of a broader limitation in existing research across Europe, which has often struggled to systematically compare initiatives and integrate different spatial levels of analysis (Penninx et al, 2008).

Dimensions of Integration are Inter-Related

61. What existing research has clearly shown is how immigrants and other residents in local communities see many of the dimensions of integration discussed in Phase 1 as being closely connected; as Niessen and Schibel (2004:9) state:

“The different dimensions of integration are inter-related and outcomes in one domain reinforce the others. For instance, jobs are valuable in developing language and broader cultural competence and in establishing social connections. In turn, social connections widen economic opportunities” (Niessen and Schibel, 2004:9)

62. Furthermore, this relationship does not just affect the everyday life experiences of migrants and other residents in local areas. It also has profound implications for interventions designed to improve the participation, integration and empowerment of migrants. For example, those civil participation/induction programmes which have been recognised as representing good practice are the ones which have been created in such a way as to be more flexible and able to deal with the relationships between these different dimensions (Niessen and Schibel, 2004).

63. This focuses our attention on critically exploring the character of the skills, spaces and processes which enable people to interact positively at a local level, and the different people and organisations involved in them. To address the limitations of existing approaches outlined above, a more critical dialogue between all those involved is required about these spaces and processes. This may also have useful implications for the broader policy framework based on a deeper level of exchange being facilitated between them.

Involving a wider range of actors

64. A useful first step suggested by Niessen and Schibel (2007) to explore the character of the spaces, processes and types of activities which encourage migrants to interact with others is to recognise that:

“Integration is ... multi-faceted, demanding a capacity for adaptation from a wide variety of actors including immigrants themselves. European societies need to become ‘learning societies’, familiarising themselves with new types of interaction and communication and with new and diverse groups of people, including immigrants and refugees.”

65. This indicates the importance of receiving societies learning from the full range of people and organisations involved and being able to distinguish between different types of involvement. For example, local and regional authorities can play a particularly important role in creating a context that is conducive to integration and by supporting initiatives which build greater interaction. Despite facing considerable challenges and difficulties, these authorities can make a substantial contribution through local integration policies and practices, as the CLIP network¹⁴ demonstrates (Bosswick and Heckmann, 2006; Bokert et al, 2007). However, the full range of potential contributors to interaction and empowerment of migrants at a local level is much wider than just public authorities and other service providers.

66. A wider range of individuals and organisations from wider civil society have much to contribute to this process, including non-governmental organisations, employers and migrants themselves. This widens the range of potential stakeholders who can play complementary roles and contribute particular expertise to the integration and empowerment process. However, if this wider range of stakeholders is to be involved, it is important to take into account the various motives and motivations that each of these potential contributors have. Finding shared reasons for interacting together is a crucial first step in creating the spaces and/or networks of relationships which enable interaction to first take place. This principle has long been recognised in community development literature, and has recently been applied to developing interactions across communities which include migrants and other local residents; see, for example, Orton (2009) in a UK context or Cvetkovic (2009) in a Swedish context.

¹⁴ CLIP stands for 'Cities for Local Integration Policy' and is "a network of 30 European cities working together to support the social and economic integration of migrants"; see <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/populationandsociety/clip.htm>. Other similar initiatives include the Intercultural Cities programme run jointly by the Council of Europe and the European Commission; see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/policies/Cities/default_en.asp.

Recognising/Creating the Spaces Where Contact May Happen

67. There are a range of different types of spaces in which contact between migrants and others in local neighbourhoods may happen. From early research into different forms of contact, researchers have recognised a range of areas where this may take place; for example, Allport (1979:263) recognised the following areas: “casual, residential, occupational, recreational, religious, civic and fraternal, political, goodwill intergroup activities”. Some of the types of contact which may be possible are summarised by Cattle (2005:177), who identifies several different types of places for cross-cultural contact and engagement. His breakdown of categories is highly applicable to interactions between migrants and others in local communities, as Table 1 shows.

TABLE 1: CATTLE’S FORMS OF CROSS-CULTURAL CONTACT AND INTERACTION

“Associational

Intra-associational – integrated and multiple identity

Associations ... open to people of different backgrounds and facilitate interchange and co-operation within the organisation

Inter-associational – networked single identity bodies

Associations represent[ing] separate and distinct interests on an exclusive and single identity basis, with associations formed by networks of separate bodies

Social

Social Incidental – arising from everyday activity

Interaction by individuals meeting through shopping, travelling or leisure activities, at an individual level, without organisation

Social Organisational – arising from planned and organised activity

Interaction by participating in sporting, music, drama and arts, which involves group activities, generally organised through clubs and societies

Structural

Structural Cross-cultural Contact

This will depend upon the extent to which schools and housing are segregated, employment opportunities are linked to particular groups and market factors create divisions, which militate against cross-cultural engagement”

68. Whilst not exhaustive, this table indicates how contact can occur in a wide variety of settings. Many of these settings may not be directly controlled by public bodies, but instead reside in the broader realm of civil society, oriented around informal groups, voluntary organisations, faith groups, and other types of association. Engaging with the particular dynamics of these types of activity (especially the voluntary nature of many of them) is crucial if initiatives to empower migrants and improve interactions are to be successful. In particular, the recognition that many of these opportunities occur in everyday contexts where people have a choice whether or not to interact, with whom, and how, means that a primary concern for promoting interaction must be establishing conditions where people want to interact, or at least recognise that they need to interact or that it would be in their interests to do so in a particular situation.

Addressing the Skills & Competencies Gap

69. Crossing this initial barrier of getting people to *want* to interact together (or at least recognise their need to interact positively in a particular situation) is a crucial first step. However, just wanting or needing to develop greater interaction and participation is insufficient for successful interaction to take place if those involved do not have the necessary skills. It is in this context that Niessen and Schibel (2007) claim that the acquisition of competencies is the second critical challenge, in addition to eliminating inequalities, which is “critical to improving immigrants’ outcomes” and “at the heart of integration policies in Europe” (Niessen and Schibel, 2007:8). This stage is referred to by Bosswick and Heckmann (2006:10) as ‘interactive integration’, meaning:

“the acceptance and inclusion of immigrants in the primary relationships and social networks of the host society. Indicators of interactive integration include social networks, friendships, partnerships, marriages and membership in voluntary organizations.”

70. For this type of integration to be achieved, the process of developing migrants’ skills in the host country’s language is a crucial part of their empowerment, as these “communicative competences are preconditions for interactive integration” (Bosswick and Heckmann, 2006:10) in most cases. A further aspect required for successful interaction, but which is often neglected, is the recognition that these encounters often involve a degree of cross-cultural interaction, even if conducted in the same language. This means that there is a need for *all* parties to develop their own specific awareness of the impacts of different cultures on these interpersonal interactions, as these can otherwise often lead to significant misunderstandings (Brislin and Yoshida, 1994).

71. To empower migrants and local residents to participate in cross-cultural interaction with each other, it is important to develop both groups' broader knowledge about the other culture and broader cultural literacy. Perhaps more importantly, it is also important to develop their cross-cultural interaction skills; these are a *set of skills and personal approaches to building relationships* which facilitate the initial cross-cultural encounter and help all parties to learn from each other.¹⁵ This type of encounter often does not come 'naturally' to people, especially those who have previously had little contact with cultures other than their own. Especially if they have little previous experience of alternative cultures, their own way of interpreting events or interpersonal signals can appear to them to be the only way which it is possible to interpret them. This can mean that people miss subtle cultural differences and indications that people understand the social world around them in very different ways. Such understandings have long been recognised in globalised interactions in fields such as international business, education, translation and welfare (Brislin and Yoshida, 1994), but have not always been applied to localised interactions between groups and individuals in local communities. However, there is an increasing European interest in supporting and developing opportunities and skills for intercultural dialogue in the spaces of everyday life as part of a broader framework of interculturalism, as the Council of Europe's (2008) 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue' demonstrates. Interculturalism focuses on enabling individuals and communities to interact and show each other mutual respect through a process of learning about each other (Salvadori, 1997).

Designing Contact Which Reduces Prejudice

72. For this process to succeed, there is also a need to take into account the social-psychological processes of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination which affect the individuals and groups involved. The broader social impact of identity and belonging will be considered in the next section, but at this stage it is worth noting the importance of social-psychological processes such as prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination against those perceived as outside one's own group. An extensive field of research has developed on these topics, particularly influenced by over 50 years of research following Allport's seminal contribution (see Dovidio, Glick and Rudman, 2005, for a good summary of the range of this work). Allport's contribution included the 'contact hypothesis', namely that:

¹⁵ Whilst some approaches to training in this arena have focused on developing particular knowledge about specific other cultures, this approach may be counterproductive if it makes people feel like they should already know about the other person's culture, and hence is afraid to ask about aspects of it in ways that might deepen their mutual relationship and understanding (see Orton, 2008a:319-378). For this reason, a broader approach which considers skills for engaging in cross-cultural interaction may be preferable, as this is less likely to cause participants to start off feeling like they should know everything about the culture of the person with whom they are interacting.

“Prejudice ... may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e. by law, custom or local atmosphere), and provided it is of the sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups” (Allport, 1954:281)

Broadly speaking, these conditions have held up to extensive scrutiny and further research, whilst encouraging much research which adapts Allport’s earlier findings concerning how, why and when this does (and doesn’t) work (for a detailed analysis, see Pettigrew and Tropp, 2005; Kenworthy et al, 2005).

73. The valuable contribution made by ‘institutional supports’ highlights the need for intercultural competencies to be developed not just in migrants and local residents, but also in the organisations that deal with them, especially public organisations which should be modelling the type of interaction they wish to encourage in others.

74. Where these intercultural competencies have not been developed sufficiently, ignorance of the impact of cultural factors can combine with individual attitudes to result in unintentional exclusion and even institutionalised prejudice and discrimination (Cantle, 2005). Where public bodies in particular fail to accommodate some acknowledgement of cultural diversity within their practices, this can then contribute towards feelings of exclusion by minority groups, including migrants. However, which practices might be accommodated, the degree to which these should be accommodated, and the political framework which might form the basis for such accommodation, remain highly contested in practice, albeit in Europe operating within the broadly agreed European principles for integration cited earlier (especially principle number 8; see page 10-11).

75. Empowering migrants to participate in informing local policy development is one acknowledged way of addressing these issues, providing that governmental organisations actively listen and respond to their views. For example, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has published several studies illustrating the potential integration policy contributions which could arise from listening more closely to immigrants’ views (e.g. Spencer et al, 2007; Lukes, 2009). Niessen and Schibel (2007, especially pp. 73-76) detail a range of ways for enabling migrants to participate in this way, noting that:

“Migrant associations and migrant-assisting NGOs¹⁶ have direct experience of inadequate policies and their consequences. They can draw attention to problems in areas such as health care, housing or education, and make suggestions for improvements to the relevant ministries.” (Niessen and Schibel, 2007:19).

76. This form of activity does however highlight the need when speaking of integration or participation to be clear about what migrants are being asked to participate *in*. There is potentially a significant difference (albeit some potential overlap) in aims and methods between those initiatives which aim to ensure migrants receive equal services/opportunities, those initiatives which aim to involve migrants in forms of participation such as voting or informing local policy development, and those initiatives which seek to bring migrants and longer-standing local residents together.¹⁷ In addition, all of these dynamics are significantly complicated by the nature and politics of identity, as this report will shortly discuss in Phase 3.

Perspectives from Practice

77. As already highlighted in Phase 1, practitioners participating in the Barcelona conference highlighted the fundamental importance of language skills, appropriate information/advice, access to employment and other policy-related measures in empowering migrants and creating the necessary pre-requisite conditions for interaction to take place. There is also a need for what one participant called “the friendly conditions of daily life”. However, in line with the theoretical contributions above, they also recognised that further work was necessary to create the opportunities and develop the skills needed for positive interactions to take place.

Examples of Local Interaction Projects

78. A range of positive local projects were cited which had helped to make positive connections and generate positive interactions between migrants and others within participants’ experience. These included:

- **Organising shared meals** together as “an opportunity to meet and share”, including “bringing your own food” to share with others.
- **Organising a “day of dialogue”** to develop these meals further, based on examples from the Netherlands. These began when a citizen in Rotterdam, worried about community relations after the 9/11 attacks,

¹⁶ NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisations

¹⁷ One recent summary which provides further details of comparative research on these issues of migrant participation in public affairs, including different types of participation and their relationship with each other, is Huddleston (2009).

“went from door to door in the street where she lived, asking people she partly never talked to before, whether they shared her worries. After a couple of days, a number of neighbours decided to cook and eat dinner together and talk about social cohesion in their street and neighbourhood. This private initiative developed into the annual ‘day of the dialogue’. People who want to meet other citizens, can register for participation at a number of places. All kind of public institutions, like schools, libraries, churches, but also more and more commercial institutions open their doors and organise one or more dialogue tables. Citizens who have shown an interest to participate, are invited to a table in their neighbourhood where they meet people whom they often have not spoken to before. Every year, one or more specific topics are chosen and discussed at every table in a more or less uniform format, in an informal setting during a meal. The project involves people on a diversity of qualities. Some people are trained in dialogue techniques and act as chair, others do the cooking on a voluntary basis, others have a quality in creating a beautiful atmosphere in the premises where people meet and decorating the table, others are financially engaged.”

- **Organising recreational activities** in shared public spaces (especially with young people).
- **Developing cultural activities** which help different cultures to celebrate their positive contributions and share these with each other. These can include “festivals”, “local history” events, “music classes of different migrant groups”, “rites of passage” and creating opportunities to share celebrations across cultures (e.g. through “inviting each other to significant festivals and rites of passage” or organising multi-cultural events). These types of participatory activity were seen as being able to be organised in ways which enable people to “understand the cultural roots of migrants, cultural ‘norms’, etc.” and improve general attitudes knowledge of each other’s cultures. They also provide opportunities for “breaking [the] isolation of migrants through socializing ([including] food and drink)”. One example of this which was cited as being successful was a celebration of Kurdish New Year organised by Kirklees Council in the UK in an area where there were high tensions between new and established communities. By involving a diverse range of around 2,000 people, positive contacts were made, positive media coverage generated, and an opportunity was created to bring together local organisations to explore issues affecting both the Kurdish community and other groups. Another example cited was “Paraules de dones”, an evening meeting run by an association in Cubelles (in the province of Barcelona) for migrants and locals to share almost what they want to share, could be food, poetry,

dance, music, talk about someone you are proud from your country or your family, etc.

- Providing “resource and space for people at a local level with and without migrant backgrounds to use their knowledge and skills to **work for a common goal**, for example, the construction of a playground or the organisation of a sports project”.
- **The use of existing institutions such as libraries** to generate meeting points (as used, for example, in Barcelona). This may require specific information for migrants on the role of these institutions, and require the institutions to adapt their work (e.g. through libraries also providing books on migrants’ countries of origin, creating particular roles to do this work, etc.).
- **Developing “schools as interaction spaces”**, including through ideas such as:
 - *Building on the “links of parents to school[s]”* to develop language training and induction programmes oriented around improving children’s school life.
 - *Developing a “‘buddy system’ for newcomers”* in which “children at school are encouraged to volunteer”.
 - *Developing particular seminars targeted at migrant students to encourage them to become teachers* (e.g. ‘Campus’, a 3-4 day seminar after high school ran in Germany).
 - *Building on links with voluntary organisations to develop greater community involvement in education* (e.g. partnership working between a Muslim Community Centre and school in Malmo, Sweden).
- **Developing “buddying” projects** or other schemes to build relationships between individuals. Examples suggested included “buddying” projects for refugees, and a local project in a Spanish town which builds intergenerational links between migrant children and older existing residents who can explain how life in that area has changed during their lifetime. This learning can go both ways within the buddying relationship; for example, one participant suggested that “young people could teach IT to older people, [and] older ones [could teach skills like] knitting, etc.”.
- **Developing programmes/organisations aiming to increase the diversity of social networks/relationships**, create new networks and build interaction within a particular neighbourhood.
- **Supporting civic involvement through voluntary association and volunteering activity**, including:

- *Creating opportunities for migrants to join and/or volunteer in local community organisations.* One country which has successfully used this approach is Germany, supported through the local 'voluntary centres' ("Ehrenamtsbörse / Freiwilligenzentrum") in which people wanting to volunteer are matched with organizations needing volunteers, for example pre-schools or local sports clubs. By recruiting migrants as volunteers, they can work alongside local residents on work of common interest; e.g. creating a community garden or running a sports club. The NGO "Bon" in Brussels is another example of an agency supporting this involvement of migrants in volunteering.¹⁸
- *"Fostering [the] work of different interest groups (women, sports, music, youth, etc.)"* which provide opportunities for broad-based interactions.
- *"Supporting [the] work of migrant NGOs", especially "grassroots organisations of migrants undertaking practical activities".* This activity was supported by several countries, and can include providing training in skills for creating and managing partnerships, applying for funding, implementing projects, etc.
- *Programmes of civic participation* which create a "mutuality of intercultural learning" – "recognise me and I will recognise you".
- *Activities which empower migrants to get involved in new ways by helping them to develop critical views of power and their ability to be involved in changing things for the better.* Two examples given were a "power school" ran in the Netherlands, which aims to give migrant participants a "new mindset ... to get [them] away from [feeling like a] 'victim'", and "theatre of the oppressed"-based approaches.¹⁹
- **"Starting up a project for young adults to try non-formal education methods, giving skills and bringing the two communities together"**

Characteristics of Successful Interaction Activities

79. In terms of their ability to generate successful interactions, the precise type of activity mattered less than the characteristics associated with it. For activities which promoted successful interactions, these were considered by the conference participants to include those which:

- "Ask what communities need", rather than making assumptions or determining this for them. Participants critiqued approaches in which

¹⁸ See: <http://www.bonvzw.be/en/>

¹⁹ See <http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org> for details of this approach.

“ideas [were] coming from [the] top, rather than grassroots level”, emphasising instead “the importance of working at grassroots level and having a holistic approach”.

- Are “easy to access” and “low threshold” in terms of being open to all regardless of previous involvement, and not requiring a long term commitment from the outset.
- Create a “protected, safe space” in which there is “trust” between participants.
- Are designed with “sustainability” in mind; e.g. with “low costs” that “can easily be spread over several partners”.
- Look at positive characteristics of participants.
- Enable everyone to use their own skills.
- “Link... existing parties to a common goal” or are based on common concerns rather than just abstract values.
- Involve a wide range of partners, including individuals, citizen’s organisations (who can be a “catalyst to get things started”), private firms, and local authorities (who can provide information and assistance, and “help overcome mis-information that might be spread”).
- Are “capacity building, participatory [and] enabling”, linking previously-unorganised people and mobilising previously-unrelated organisations into new networks (without necessarily “demand[ing] the launch of a new organisation” from the outset).
- Organisers adapt based on the views of the groups involved. (For example, one “multi-cultural event in a local authority ... was so committed to involving all communities” that it changed the day of the event “from Saturday to Thursday to enable the Jewish community to take part”.)

Barriers and Pitfalls in Integration Activities

80. A range of barriers and pitfalls to these activities being successful in their aims to empower and integrate migrants were also identified by conference participants. These included:

1. The inflexibility of a ‘one size fits all’ approach

81. Participants critiqued those projects which were based on an approach that assumed “one size fits all”, especially when combined with a “lack of flexibility [which means a] project becomes irrelevant” over time. In their experience, there is a need for a more tailored/individual approach to ensure participation. It is easy for projects to fail as a result of not being accessible,

flexible and responsive enough to meet the needs of those involved. One example of a project which had failed in this regard was a website designed to help migrants to find information when they decided to return to their countries of origin, but which had not succeeded in reaching those involved or offering information that was of interest to its intended audience.

2. Stereotyping and labels

82. Participants also critiqued those projects which based their activities too much on anticipated stereotypes and predetermined labels. This has several detrimental effects, including:

- People “talking about each other, instead of with each other”
- “Projecting stereotypes in activities” rather than enabling people to interact with others in all their complexities. This led one participant to exclaim “We’re not all the same!!!”. Another participant noted that:

“By explaining ‘how ethnic minorities are’, often a static image is communicated. This does not cope with the much more differentiated reality. As a result minorities are in fact easily stereotyped and alienated. The social distance people experience will not disappear or lessen. Providing ‘manuals on other cultures’ in general is tricky.”
- “Narrow definitions of identities” and labels creating “problems of terminology” in terms of involvement in activities; for example, if activities are directed at “migrants”, does this include “3rd generation descendents of migrants”? (Issues related to labels and identity will be developed further in Phase 3).
- “Too much misinformation” filling the gaps where people don’t have sufficient accurate information.

83. Managed badly, participants recognised that “interaction can stimulate dislike; reinforcement of stereotypes; jealousy between groups”. Strategies were recommended by participants to help to avoid these pitfalls. These included:

- To “give individuals a voice and respect their views”
- To “harness complementary skills”: “The best teams don’t comprise people who are all the same”.
- “Don’t assume all people who share one label are all the same in all ways” and be “aware of complexities within groups”.
- Rather than communicating abstract information about particular groups, it can be more effective to help people find ways of engaging in positive interactions with those in diverse groups so that they can learn

a more nuanced understanding directly through these interactions. One participant recommended that “it’s on the whole more effective, and less free of obligations, to instruct people on mechanisms about in- and out-group thinking, inclusion and exclusion, different identities every citizen possesses and issues with regard to the labelling and conceptualization of different groups in society”.

3. The media

84. Practitioners recognised the media’s role in these issues as being “very important”. Their experiences reflected the difficulties recognised in the wider literature concerning how the role of the media can often be problematic for local migrant empowerment and interaction efforts. Practitioners reflected that “Good news = no news”, but when “bad perceptions of a project” are distributed by the media and “migrants are used negatively to promote political campaigns”, this can undermine positive local work. Whilst it can be “difficult to influence media [coverage] in a democratic society”, some participants had made some progress on this issue by:

- (i) Giving “special training to media [and] migrants so they get more involved in [the] public debate; also so they become actors rather than [just a] target group” (in the Netherlands). This could include work with media employees on issues such as diversity in films, sitcoms, series, etc. and “closer co-operation to foster understanding of what is at stake” with editors and journalists, as well as media training with leaders of local migrant associations and NGOs who are active on these issues.
- (ii) “Increasing migrant participation as media professionals”.
- (iii) Creating a “media prize”, which “has led to a notable improvement in media treatment of migrant issues (especially on racism)” (in Belgium).

4. Skills development

85. A “lack of diversity & intercultural training for key officials” was identified as a significant barrier, including a lack of training in “interaction activities”. Participants felt that “service providers need more practical information in order to apply principles of intercultural dialogue/competence”. As a result, the “intercultural unawareness” of some officials was criticised, and the “competency of [some] officials dealing with migrants” questioned. Participants suggested that there needed to be a process of “empowering the official dealing with migrants”, especially through “adequate training on intercultural issues for holders of some occupations”; some information could also be provided online. A “structured, regular dialogue between NGOs and local administrations” was suggested as a helpful way of identifying and responding to these issues and

reducing the “distance between governments and street level”, providing this dialogue was sufficiently “open, honest [and] constructive”. Training for participants in “active listening” skills within interaction activities was considered important, and there was support for making use of, and training, “community intermediaries” who could support this work. Residents’ associations, migrants groups and interested individuals could also “benefit from specific training through neighbourhood centres” which builds their capacity to engage in integration-related activities, including “coaching to enable them to do work themselves”. Another way of delivering this capacity building could be through pairing up an “established NGO with [a] new NGO” working in this field so expertise can be shared and support given. Training could also be usefully provided for religious leaders to help them “to have better skills to influence and lead (in a positive way) evolving religious communities” that include migrants.

86. There were also particular issues expressed for translators. Participants felt that “training on intercultural competence for translators” was needed in order “to ensure accuracy of message to be conveyed”. “Well-trained interpreters” who understand “culture” and “intercultural sensitive issues” as well as language may be able to play a key role in supporting interaction where these are prioritised and funded (e.g. in Belgium), providing their role is clear. This principle was also felt to apply more widely to public authorities, who should “see languages as a culture, not only as tools for communication”.

5. Evaluation of initiatives

87. Some concerns were expressed about the lack of “sharing of knowledge” and intelligence which often led to “projects being repeated” without being aware of previous learning or “progressive insights”. Monitoring and evaluation of interaction and empowerment projects is often limited and there may be a “lack of objectivity in evaluating” some projects and “lack of institutional memory” in remembering what works in delivering this work. Nevertheless, expected outcomes needed to be realistic; one participant recognised “too high expectations” as being a pitfall. Participants supported attempts to share information between cities on their initiatives, especially a “systematic sharing [of] ‘do’s and don’ts’” and criticised an “insufficient sharing of relevant know-how”.

6. Lack of co-ordination and communication

88. Other pitfalls included a “lack of co-ordination” of different activities operating in an area, with a need to “promote activities for projects to know each other better”. Without this dialogue, it is easy for activities to become “multicultural rather than intercultural”. Good co-ordination and

communication was also required within particular projects and organisations running empowerment and interaction activities to enable them to be successful. Good co-ordination and communication is also necessary between migrants and public bodies. There can be an important role for mediators and other services in helping to achieve this. Access to services can also be organised within the framework of a regional plan, if sufficient political leadership is in place.

7. Funding and resources

89. The activities and training which enable migrants to be empowered and which enable interaction to be stimulated clearly require resourcing if they are to be successful in the context of the substantial challenges facing them. Financial and other forms of support were particularly felt to be necessary for grassroots organisations, with such support coming from a range of sources (including public and lottery funds), and needing to be targeted to them.

90. Conference participants recognised a number of resource-related pitfalls which can undermine the effectiveness of empowerment and interaction-related projects. These included competition for funding between organisations who might otherwise work together. This competition can contribute towards division rather than integration, and prevent knowledge being shared between projects. Where possible, participants recommended organising “complementary activities rather than competing for resources”.

91. Projects need to have “sustained support” as part of “long term programmes” if they are to be successful. For example, programmes in Belgium aim to run for at least three years in order to improve their impact. Short term approaches involving “time limited funding” for projects were recognised as a common pitfall which can undermine their effectiveness. This creates a “lack of continuity” and “lack of planning for sustainability”. Projects that are “money driven” rather than being based on actual community needs were another common pitfall.

92. Participants recommended that “Government financial support needs to be distributed equitably – not just to [the] ‘usual suspects’” who have an established track record of receiving Government funds. This means that there is a need to “invest in helping smaller new community organisations to develop better proposals [and] manage the money” and “develop links between government/senior official and ‘grassroots’ to enable better funding decisions”. Whilst there does need to be some controls over how funding is distributed, application processes need to “provide a clear message” and use “simple, understandable procedures (less paperwork)”.

93. Other types of resources can also make a significant contribution to this work, especially in a “harsh economic climate”. Appreciation from authorities for interaction and empowerment activities, including symbolic support, celebrations after completing interaction courses, etc. can provide encouragement. Organisers can also “look for sponsors [who may include] private foundations, banks, employers, religious groups, [etc.]”. With all these sources of support, it helps to have a “clear contract” and appropriate controls in places to manage potentially different agendas affecting their involvement in the project. Support may not always be provided in the form of cash. Participants recommended exploring “benefits in kind”; e.g. “language & vocational skills training provided by employers”, “space to meet” from different local land/building owners, and using “high skilled employees as volunteers with time out from their companies” as part of a programme of “corporate social responsibility”. “Compliance with international standards of private companies [e.g.] OSCE standards of good governance” are one possible incentive for involving employers. Other sources of support include gap year students with relevant skills.

8. Political correctness

94. Participants recognised that “labelling someone politically or not politically correct can exclude them and/or stop discussion”. However, the term was “not a clear term” so participants recommended “avoid[ing] it or treat[ing] it with care”. Similarly, participants agreed that suppressing debates or avoiding conflicts can reduce the potential for honest dialogue, but there is also a need to “be careful and sensitive and respect” those involved when engaging in any related interventions.

9. Managing appropriate participation and issues of representation

95. In terms of enabling interaction, one surprisingly common pitfall was creating projects which included “only migrants and not [the] whole community or society at large”. However, this sometimes arose from the creation of positive activities specifically for migrants in order, for example, “to ensure equality of treatment and access (where general services are not able to cover migrants)”. Where this was felt to be necessary, participants recommended that a “full explanation is necessary of objectives” to the wider public to prevent misunderstandings or resentments based on perceptions of migrants receiving “special treatment”. Where possible, it may be “better to adapt existing services rather than create two parallel services”, although participants recognised there may be some needs which are “not needed by society at large; e.g. language”. Where these were addressed in a specialised/targeted way, some participants felt that “the relevant programme must be specific and limited in time” for each migrant accessing it, as an

initial step which forms part of a longer term programme moving towards eventual integration. Activities aiming to generate interaction “must not be isolated” and those involved need to think carefully about exactly how the participation of the different stakeholders can be achieved.

96. Another related pitfall which was identified by many of the conference participants was a “lack of participation in [the] design of projects”, especially where there were “no opportunities for migrants to have key role in project” or migrants were involved in a non-determining role and “at a too late stage”. This can often come across as a “paternalistic approach” and be part of a broader tendency to encounter pitfalls through a “bad management of stakeholders of migration projects”.

97. Even when some different stakeholders are involved, problems can still be encountered when there is “inadequate representation”. Difficulties can also arise because of “jealousy” or where “one group dominates [the] interaction” (the “loudest voice in [the] group”). As recognised above, because all members of a group may not share all things in common, there can often seem to be a “lack of a common goal within an ethnic group” which can cause problems if the interaction is dependent on one person representing others’ interests. Where representative bodies are created by local authorities with the intention of providing opportunities for migrants to inform policy, the composition and mandate of these bodies is particularly important.²⁰

98. Implementing successful empowerment and interaction activities which take into account these potential pitfalls can be a complex and difficult task. If these activities are to be developed in a way which leads on to effective integration of migrants within receiving communities, then not only are these activities required to create the necessary opportunities, but they also need to take into account issues of belonging and identity, which will now be considered.

²⁰ One example given where significant lessons were learnt about this process was in the experience of “Ausländerbeiräte” (“local foreigners’ councils / local foreigners’ advisory boards”) in Germany. Many of these are being reformed to improve their levels of involvement and improve their capacity for integration and influencing local policy through a range of measures, including in some cases involving local councillors. An example cited as being successful at a local level was “Democracy and Participation Seminars” in Huddinge municipality, Sweden, which bring together migrants and local politicians to explore participation issues and keep politicians informed of issues affecting migrants. At a national level, the “Contact Committee for Immigrants and the Authorities” (KIM) in Norway was provided as another positive example. Issues of representation and participation in cross-community interaction activities are also explored in more detail using English practitioners’ experiences in Orton (2009).

Phase 3: Building a sense of belonging and shared identity

99. Whilst interaction between migrants and others in local communities is essential for developing their ability to relate well to each other, interaction by itself does not guarantee social cohesion. A further step is necessary, which Bosswick and Heckmann (2006:10) call 'identificational integration'. They describe this additional transition from the migrants' point of view in the following way:

"It is not possible to participate in a host society's core institutions without having first acquired the cultural competencies by which these institutions function. It is, however, possible to participate without identifying with the goals of these institutions and without having developed a feeling of belonging to the host society. This feeling of belonging may develop later in the integration process ... as a result of participation and acceptance."

100. In practice, however, this process of identification and belonging raises complex issues of identity for all concerned, and may not always happen. Weeks (1990:88) describes the relationship between identity and belonging in the following way:

"Identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others, and in the modern world these have become ever more complex and confusing."

101. These issues do not just affect migrants, but affect everyone. As Westin (2008:1-2) argues, engaging with them requires a fundamental recognition of both similarity and difference:

"Policymakers must validate the complexities of identity issues in an increasingly multi-ethnic Europe. ... Identity issues are at the core of integration because integration implies that society must recognise that certain differences do actually exist between its individual members, be they in terms of age, gender, sexuality, religion, language, ethnicity or culture"

102. However, national attempts to improve social cohesion are often undermined by “the fuzzy relationship between promoting national values and identities, on the one hand, and seeking to promote acceptance for diversity, on the other” (Westin, 2008:3). The increase in migration and the increased awareness of difference in a globalised world have challenged many previous understandings of self-identity in receiving countries as well as amongst migrants themselves (Papastergiadis, 2000).

103. In this context, it is important to recognise that migrants can frequently be the catalysts for broader debates about identity, difference and exclusion within a particular country. They can even become scapegoats or modern-day ‘folk devils’ for all that existing residents see as being wrong with changing society in that country.²¹ As Carrera (2005:5) states:

“The category of immigration and the juridical label of ‘foreigner’ are often uncritically linked to integration problems or crises. These approaches take for granted that those not holding the nationality of the receiving state are the only ones facing problems of inclusion, identity and participation in the system and the ‘life world’.”

104. A broader approach requires the historical recognition that host countries themselves are not homogeneous, but are themselves of diverse composition, having included various populations of migrants over a number of generations. This requires locating discussions about migrants’ identity and integration within broader understandings of the nature and formation of identity, as well as their relationship with considerations of various other “aspects of social exclusion such as racism, discrimination, segregation, xenophobia, ethnocentrism and other forms on inequality.” (Westin, 2008:2).

105. A common concern in this regard is that notions of identity and belonging can become implicated in the exclusion process, as Sacks (2002:10, 8) recognises:

“Identity divides. The very process of creating an ‘Us’ involves creating a ‘Them’ – the people not like us.” “Peace involves a profound crisis of identity. The boundaries of self and other, friend and foe, must be redrawn.”

106. This highlights how identities are formed as part of a complex set of social processes throughout life, arguably with a particularly acute developmental stage at adolescence (Bailey, 2009). Sardar (2004:21) describes

²¹ The social processes which create ‘folk devils’ and ‘moral panics’ around issues which touch the nerve of uncertainty about complex social changes were originally reflected in a classical sociological study by Cohen (1987).

the interactive nature of these processes of identity formation in the following way:

“[w]hat is mutual is that the human condition is a cultural condition and that culture is an essential relational attribute, an enabling feature of knowing, being and doing [...] It is the acceptance that for all people everywhere identity is not formed in a vacuum but within a cultural realm that comes with values, history, axes to grind and a variety of perplexities, conundrums and perennial questions”

107. In situations where particular identities are felt to be under threat (and resources competed over), these cultural and psycho-social processes can easily become polarised (Van Oudenhoven et al, 2008). This supports the formation of fundamentalist or nationalistic ideologies which resist any acceptance of difference (religious, national and/or cultural) (Bruce, 2003; Sacks, 2002; Castells, 2004). As Castells (1996:3) describes:

“In a world of uncontrolled, confusing change, people tend to regroup around primary identities: religious, ethnic, territorial, national.”

108. A common critique of some forms of multiculturalism has been that they recognise differences between groups who are identified on these grounds, without recognising the differences within such groups. Moreover, only emphasising one particular identifier (whether, national, ethnic, territorial or religious) can lead to relationships between groups which are polarised and fundamentally conflictual (Magnuson, 2009). This occurs because these relationships are constructed from the outset as being entirely between those who are different on the primary grounds which are seen to matter. Such dynamics have also contributed to the rise of identity politics, in which political relationships between groups become connected to these particular characteristics (Westin, 2008). This polarisation also leaves little room for the recognition that identities and cultures are not fixed, but involve relationships that are part of a two-way process, leading both to change through the interaction.²²

109. A wide range of research has shown that a person’s sense of identity and belonging is not based solely on one single (inherited or choice-based) affiliation to one particular primary group or category. The relationship of

²² This, of course, is precisely what fundamentalists of all persuasions are most opposed to, and which drives them to erect ever more rigid boundaries to reinforce their own identity as it differs from those of others. Nevertheless, there remains an ongoing debate for everyone involved in this form of two-way interaction concerning which aspects of their identities and values are negotiable and which aspects form the core basis of their own interaction with the world (Salvadori, 1997). The European principles cited earlier set out a clear vision of what the signatory states consider this basis to be for citizens in a European context, and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (Council of Europe, 2008) describes how this might be applied in practice. This issue will be returned to in Phase 4.

individual identity with collective identity and belonging is much more complex than this (Peters, 2003). From a social-psychological point of view, people tend to be attracted to those who are similar to them in at least some respects. If the resulting attraction causes the existing residents to re-define migrants as part of their own in-group ('one of us' rather than 'one of them'), or if migrants to do the same for existing residents, then this can play a significant role in building a sense of common identity and belonging (see Gaertner and Dovidio, 2005). In this transition process:

“a key element determining the impact of a dual identity on intergroup relations is likely [to be] what a dual identity signals – whether it is perceived as a sign of progress towards a desired goal, or as a threat.”
(Gaertner and Dovidio, 2005:84)

110. This highlights the need for people to find at least some aspect of their identity in common as part of a transitional process to build mutual belonging in local areas (see Department for Communities and Local Government, 2009a for one practical application of this).

111. However, this process does not necessarily need to cause people to abandon all other affiliations in order to accept the new one. In many circumstances, an individual's identity can include “overlapping” or “nesting identities” (Peters, 2003:27). These involve an individual recognising that they may sometimes hold multiple affiliations at the same time, and that these affiliations do not always have to be mutually exclusive. A good example of this in a European context is the way that citizens can belong to local, regional, national and European identities simultaneously, providing they see each of these affiliations as mutually supportive rather than in competition with each other (Westin, 2008).

112. Modood et al (1994) are among a number of theorists²³ who have increasingly used the term ‘hybridity’ to describe this revised understanding of identity and belonging:

“Identities are not closely tied to single issues or symbols; people hold multiple identifications, some more strongly than others, and they use these flexibly according to circumstance. In this context these identifications are also expressions of cultural hybridity, where a variety of historical, international, ideological and political facts influence expressions of self-hood, belonging and relationships with others. People have created cultural spaces through which they express

²³ The notion of hybridity as a form of identification which opens up new possibilities and choices has been particularly developed by Bhabha – see, for example, Bhabha (1990).

a variety of different and competing identity claims” (Modood et al, 1994:12).

113. These issues do not just affect new immigrants; they affect everyone. However, they may be particularly acute for groups (such as 2nd generation descendents of immigrants) who find themselves having to explicitly choose how to identify themselves (Melia, 2004). For example, one comparative European study across three countries of 2nd generation descendents of immigrants (European Forum for Migration Studies, 2001) found that:

“The prime modes of identification in all three countries are with parents’ home country and multiple forms of identification, that is “hyphenated” identities relating both to the country of origin of their parents and the immigration country.”²⁴

114. Research evidence is increasingly showing how transnational migrants (e.g. Xuereb, 2009) and other ethnic minorities (e.g. Barker, 1999, especially pp. 72-73) can do more than just hold one cultural affiliation themselves. In the right circumstances, they can use these hybrid identities and multiple affiliations in a creative and flexible way to build bridges between the different contributing spheres of their life. For example, as people move between different environments where they are addressed differently (e.g. between home and work), they can sometimes be adept at switching between different identities and their associated cultural codes, and “weave the patterns of [their] identity” from the multiple possibilities that this presents (Barker, 1999:73). They may then be able to use their multiple belongings to help others to bridge these divides, by helping them to relate to and understand each other better.

115. In situations where a mutual sense of identity and belonging are trying to be built, this does mean that a useful starting point is initially trying to find aspects of identity which different people have in common. Creating a common in-group identity that is more shared and inclusive, rather than focusing primarily on factors which divide, can help build positive associations with those who become recognised as part of that common group (Gaertner and Dovidio, 2005). However, Gaertner and Dovidio also find evidence that if room is not also left for people to recognise and explore their differences and dual/multiple identities, then they may fail to generalise any

²⁴ The relationship between migrants and their originating countries is important in this regard. “A case in point is the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals programme which supports projects seeking to assist the setting up of transnational cooperation networks or pilot projects designed to identify, exchange and evaluate good practice and new approaches in the field of integration; to increase the knowledge base for the development of integration policies across the EU; and to support transnational dialogue and awareness of the impact of integration on society” (Xuereb, 2009:17).

sense of shared identity and belonging they find beyond any one particular individual encounter.

116. Putting people in the position where they have to choose only one form of primary identification fails to reflect the complexity of their own self-identity. Moreover, it can destroy the possibilities for people to develop their own reflexive narrative (Rew and Campbell, 1999) about how individuals can be *both* a migrant *and* belong to the host community. This is crucial to them developing a sense of belonging. At its worst, if applied insensitively by public authorities who ask immigrants to choose between two equally important facets of their own identity, it can contribute significantly to a sense of alienation from the wider host society. Zappone (2003) has highlighted how recognising the importance of multiple identities is crucial for all human-rights-based work. This involves recognising differences within individuals which do not fit solely into one category or 'box' and recognising differences within social groups, whilst also recognising the impact of intersections between the social relations of different groups. For example, she cites a study by the Equality Authority in Ireland on minority ethnic people with disabilities to indicate the fluidity of identity:

“At any one time, a person may hold multiple identities, but choose to assert or express an identity that is most meaningful to them at that time or in a particular context. For example, one participant in the study expressed her ethnic identity through her participation in an African choir. This does not mean that ethnic identity is the totality of her identity. Her identity as a woman, a disabled person, a parent and as a woman living in poverty were also important components of her identity” (Zappone, 2003:133).²⁵

117. Recognising these different components of an individual's identity opens up new possibilities for people to connect with each other on aspects of their identity which they have in common, whilst acknowledging that they still differ in other ways. The recognition of aspects of similarity within diverse identities is essential for making initial connections with a wider range of people. This provides an opportunity for building relationships over time with a broad range of people from different backgrounds. The recognition of difference is equally crucial, as this enables people to deepen their relationships over time through exploring not just their similarities but also (like any friendship or relationship) exploring how they differ too. A community with deep and diverse relationships offers much greater potential

²⁵ Women can play a particularly important role in enabling integration to take place – separate work by the Council of Europe is underway to explore this role further. The importance of recognising gender issues in migration more generally is argued by lobbying organisations such as the European Women's Lobby; see <http://www.womenlobby.org>

for recognition of others, much greater opportunities for generating new links and interactions, and hence greater capacity to integrate migrants effectively.

118. The broad and developing field of research on ‘social capital’ provides a helpful way of further exploring the evidence for this relationship between identity, belonging and the social relations of different individuals and groups.²⁶ Field (2008) highlights how this research has drawn attention to the different types of relationships, networks, links and bonds which contribute towards belonging, and how these relate to shared norms and values, summarising the concept in two words: “relationships matter” (Field, 2008:1). The concept of ‘social capital’ has developed differently through the work of various theorists, notably Bourdieu and Coleman, with Putnam’s (1993; 2000) work being particularly influential. Putnam sees the term ‘social capital’ as referring to:

“features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions”.

119. However, trust and social capital within a group, like identity and belonging, are recognised as having both positive benefits and a ‘dark side’ (see Field, 2008 for a detailed summary of evidence on both). The development of a network of relationships solely based on shared ties of identity can facilitate interaction within that community, and can be an important form of belonging, but can also be problematic for that group (e.g. in reinforcing patterns of power inequality) or the wider community (e.g. in the case of organised criminal networks). An overemphasis on what binds a group together may generate a strong sense of internal belonging but may also act to exclude those who are different. This dimension has been particularly debated with regard to faith groups, some of whom can be particularly active in running community projects which bridge community divides, but whose orientation around a particular faith identity and worldview can also be divisive or exclusive (Furbey et al, 2006; Orton, 2008a).

120. Some studies have found a greater ethnic diversity in the population is correlated with a lower level of social capital and trust (Coffé and Geys, 2005). However, this is a controversial area, and at least one large scale study has recently produced data which has questioned this in a European context (Hooghe et al, 2009).²⁷ To the extent that this is true it is more likely to be symptomatic of the problems of interaction and belonging (as highlighted

²⁶ An accessible introductory summary on this material is available from Smith (2007), and an international research hub on this material is available at: <http://www.socialcapitalgateway.org>.

²⁷ For several papers on this theme, see <http://www.kuleuven.be/citizenship/cohesion.htm>.

above) than their cause (Coffé and Geys, 2005). This fits Putnam's (2007) interpretation of data from the USA on this issue:

"Diversity seems to trigger not in-group/out-group division, but anomie or social isolation. In colloquial language, people living in ethnically diverse settings appear to 'hunker down' – that is, to pull in like a turtle. ... Diversity does not produce 'bad race relations' or ethnically-defined group hostility, our findings suggest. Rather, inhabitants of diverse communities tend to withdraw from collective life, to distrust their neighbours, regardless of the colour of their skin, to withdraw even from close friends, to expect the worst from their community and its leaders, to volunteer less, give less to charity and work on community projects less often, to register to vote less, to agitate for social reform more, but have less faith that they can actually make a difference, and to huddle unhappily in front of the television. Note that this pattern encompasses attitudes and behavior, bridging and bonding social capital, public and private connections. Diversity, at least in the short run, seems to bring out the turtle in all of us." (Putnam, 2007:149-151)

121. This has led to the recognition of the importance of building trust between different groups, including migrants and existing residents, as an important part of activity to improve integration (Federal Ministry of the Interior/Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008). This also highlights the need to support those local initiatives which develop meaningful positive interactions between people at a local level to counter their fear of diversity, whether migrant or existing local resident.

122. As work on social capital has developed, a particularly useful distinction is made by Woolcock (2001:13-14) between:

- "(a) bonding social capital, which denotes ties between like people in similar situations, such as immediate family, close friends and neighbours;
- (b) bridging social capital, which encompasses more distant ties of like persons, such as loose friendships and workmates; and
- (c) linking social capital, which reaches out to unlike people in dissimilar situations, such as those who are entirely outside the community, thus enabling members to leverage a far wider range of resources than are available within the community."

123. In practice, Putnam (2007:143) has seen 'bonding' social capital as being about "ties to people who are like you in some important way" and 'bridging'

social capital as being about “ties to people who are unlike you in some important way”. Significantly, he has also critiqued the assumptions that some have made about the relationship between these two types of social capital:

“Too often, without really thinking about it, we assume that bridging social capital and bonding social capital are inversely correlated in a kind of zero sum relationship: if I have lots of bonding ties, I must have few bridging ties, and vice versa. As an empirical matter, I believe that assumption is often false. In other words, high bonding might well be compatible with high bridging, and low bonding with low bridging.” (Putnam, 2007:143-144)

124. This raises the possibility that the generation of wider networks between more distant or different individuals and communities can be an important way to generate cohesion and empowerment, and need not necessarily mean a loss of the support from existing identity groups (depending on how the identity in question is framed). In fact, the more diverse and multi-layered relationships people can be encouraged to have, the less easy it is for any one particular basis for identity to take precedence and undermine cohesion. This means that all three types of social capital are essential in promoting migrant integration and empowerment.

125. Voluntary associations and organisations, faith groups and other social partners can play a crucially important role in enabling this diversity of supportive relationships to happen across communities more generally (see Orton, 2009). A range of recent small-scale studies have also shown how localised initiatives by these agencies can make an important contribution to integrating migrants in particular. For example, support networks involving these non-public authority groups can play a significant role in providing timely support to migrants despite their own limited resources; see Hamer and Mazzucato (2009), particularly in terms of a case study involving West African newcomers in the Netherlands, and Orton (2008b) on a small scale project in Bradford, UK. This role often extends beyond support to assisting in a migrant’s integration; for example, Caseli (2009) highlights how immigrant associations play an important role in promoting participation and integration in Milan, whilst helping migrants to maintain and rediscover their identity in their new environment. However, this depends on the way that these groups deploy and build social capital, which types they build, and how they connect this with the multiple identities of those involved (Zetter et al, 2006).

126. Overall, this section points to the need to recognise identity and belonging in terms of a rich, diverse, and multi-layered set of affiliations. The fostering of this diversity of connections creates resilience within communities to resist forms of identity politics that involve polarising relationships around one particular aspect of difference. Understanding identity in this way can help to open up new possibilities for encouraging belonging, especially through recognising the role of an active civil society which supports peaceful group organisation through free association in a supportive policy context.

Perspectives from Practice

1. Building mutual recognition, belonging and shared identities between migrants and receiving communities

127. To build mutual recognition, group discussions between the Barcelona conference participants started with the recognition that “We all have different and complex identities – [it is] important to recognise and value this, whilst trying to develop a sense of appreciation of the variety of identities”. However, groups recognised that “if difference is made an issue, it can work against our aims” when trying to improve integration in some situations. Participants agreed that “people with dual/multiple identities are at risk” in such situations, as they may not fall neatly into any one imposed category. Whilst this was “not necessarily negative”, they felt this “needs care” to avoid exacerbating any potential feelings of exclusion. If supported, those holding such identities may be able to make particular contributions to integration activities because their hybrid identity may help them to build bridges between different groups. They also agreed that it was important to generally “avoid activities that require people to make [unnecessary] choices between identities; e.g. conflict between religious beliefs and secular society”.

128. Building recognition of each other that recognises, but is not solely based on, difference means that it is “important to find creative ways to generate a greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures and beliefs at a deep, not superficial, level”. This type of recognition recognises the complexity of identity, and avoids the loaded language and over-simplifications which “politicians and high profile media can damage the situation” by using. One group concluded that “the language used is important. Was Hiroshima a ‘Christian’ bomb? So ‘labels’ should be used carefully”. Proactive use of various media to explore these issues, including the complexity of identity, can be a helpful way of building mutual recognition by raising awareness of the issues concerned.

For example, one way of doing this is that it can be “good to dig down into the roots of high profile media people to generate greater understanding of their roots”. This can illustrate how we all have complex identities and heritages.

129. A revised understanding of the “nature of diversity” was at the core of participants’ approaches to generating recognition, belonging and shared identities. They saw a view of citizenship in which “diversity [is] at the core of [a] new identity (e.g. Canada)”. This diversity was both a “fact” and a “choice” which could, if valued, be used to promote positive attributes in societies such as “creativity”. This extends beyond just issues of differences attributed to migration to other aspects of identity as well. Areas which have adopted this affirming approach to diversity have been able to see the diversity of the community as “a resource” and “asset”, which can be used to underpin “guided tours, touristic attractions, ... marketing, business” and multilingualism. However, there is a risk that this may just be “window dressing”, “part of the image for the outside”, if it is only undertaken in a cynical or tokenistic manner. Going beyond this to build genuine relationships that underpin belonging requires a two-way process of respect which involves all the different individuals and groups in a society, not just migrants. Acknowledging the wealth of diversity, including acknowledging other aspects of diversity such as age and gender and breaking down stereotypes through positive interactions, helps build relationships between these different groups. At the centre of this is the process of “creating [a] new identity, [a] new ‘us’”, built on the basis of local interactions.

130. Within this emerging complexity of identity within diversity, the conference participants noted several important points which they considered needed to be taken into account. They indicated that “how the differences are manifested is important”, as “different identities exist in different contexts”. Whilst people do play an active role in shaping their own identity, participants noted that “people are not necessarily free to choose their identity ... difference should be made between [aspects of] identity that a person chooses and those that are not chosen”. In addition, “internal conflict of identities is to be taken into account”, especially as “there is a limit to the number of identities a person can sustain”.

131. Many of the interaction-oriented activities discussed within Phase 2 were considered excellent opportunities to develop mutual recognition of diversity further into opportunities to develop shared values and a sense of belonging. However, the key limitation of some activities is that they may “create knowledge, but this does not necessarily change attitudes and

behaviour", leading one group to ask "How can we develop approaches that positively affect attitudes and mutual recognition across communities?".

132. Fear was recognised as a substantial barrier to building recognition and belonging. This fear had many aspects, including "fear of a process that cannot be controlled [by] local community, local politicians but also migrants" and "fear amongst migrants that their hierarchy of values will break down" because their "children feel they have power" which can cause "fear by parents".

133. Nevertheless, one group felt that it was important "not to put too much emphasis on emotions" because "people feel a part of a normative unit when they are able to have meaningful interactions". Instead of focusing on a "fixed identity", it was considered important to build a "process of identification through shared experience at the local level". Some forms of "strong local identity give room for diversity", whereas others are more rigid and can exclude it. "Shared values do not necessarily lead to shared identity", but having clear "values at home ... give the ability [and] security to interact with other groups without losing [one's own sense of] identity".

134. Affecting personal attitudes was considered to require "spaces and places for sharing experiences" which create "new, personal experiences for people". These opportunities can be developed from natural spaces, or involve the creation of new activities. Either way, if they are to realise their potential, they need "commitment from all the actors/stakeholders" and to be "part of local strategies" with specific allocated "resources".

135. There were a range of existing spaces and activities which the conference participants felt could be developed to facilitate interactions which generate mutual recognition and belonging. These included:

- "Public space, intercultural gardens (e.g. Germany)"
- Workplaces, school and "day care for children used by [a] wide range of families", enabling people to exchange and develop informal contacts
- "Youth organisations recognising the diversity"
- "Establishing ties through everyday interactions (going to a bar, coffee place), 'getting used to different people'"
- Bonding through sport (e.g. football).

136. Existing activities may need some adaptation if they are to be effectively used to build shared senses of belonging in response to diversity. For example, it may be necessary to "teach/train employers [and] teachers

how to deal with diversity”, including being specific about the particular “cultural backgrounds of their pupils” and how to deal effectively with “recurrent issues”. However, the type of training provided is important, and needs to give professionals the scope to learn reflectively through their own practice and apply learning in their own role and context. Without this form of empowering training, poor quality training can risk perpetuating the current environment in which people such as employers and “teachers are afraid to do something wrong” and so may often avoid getting involved in these issues.

137. For those developing new activities, the actions suggested included to “look for common concerns that bring people together, set up common spaces, unite around shared interests, [develop] outreach activities to encourage participation of excluded groups, [and] identify ‘values’ ... to define what people have in common”. A wide range of different approaches to activities can help to widen engagement. “Doing, rather than listening” may help generate initial involvement, and in the process, creates an “opportunity to ask questions and find out more”. Activities such as eating together can create such opportunities, both informally and through “opportunities for speakers”. Participatory activities may help to generate interest and understanding; e.g. open opportunities to participate in activities from other cultures, such as Bollywood dancing, how to wear a sari, etc.

138. In some cases, it may be helpful to focus the activity on something other than ethnicity, culture or migration status; as one group noted, sometimes it helps to take an approach based on an understanding of “Let’s stop talking about diversity and just get on with being [people]”. For example, it can be helpful to “look for different membership than ethnicity e.g. profession, common concerns, etc.” and base activities around these. For example, one group stated “We all share the same planet – therefore [the] environment [is] a shared concern” which can bring people together. In other cases, activities can deliberately link people who have different backgrounds on the basis of this difference (for example, pairing migrant families with families in the receiving community, where “affinity between families is [the] key factor e.g. age of kids”). It is nevertheless important to recognise that other groupings may be more important to people in shaping their sense of self other than migration or ethnicity; for example, one group suggested that, in some circumstances, “Ethnicity is not always the defining factor for young people – shared youth identity can overcome ethnic ‘barriers’”. Supporting the formation of multiple local networks based around different topics can enable people to interact with each other on the basis of different parts of their identity and different interests/concerns they have.

139. Alternative bases for forging initial connections between diverse groups that were recognised by participants included “religious affiliation”, which can build links between otherwise diverse people based on shared beliefs. Those suggesting this recognised that religion can sometimes be seen by others as exclusive and that there can be tensions making these connections within a “secular society [which is] suspicious when you admit to be a believer”. However, this can begin to be counteracted by “opening religious spaces” and communities “to the neighbourhood”, showing that they are “open to participation”, holding an “open day” to show what religious communities do, and seeking to generate greater dialogue between those of different worldviews. Similar approaches can be taken with diverse ethnic groups and/or residents’ associations. For example, “themes [can be] identified by [a local authority’s] cultural department with [a] network of local associations” leading to the involvement of a “very diverse group of participants identified through local networks” around a common theme who get involved in a common activity whilst retaining their sense of group identity.

140. Within this, it is nevertheless still crucial to be mindful of the impact of other differences and their meanings within particular cultures, as this may affect activities endeavouring to promote mutual recognition. For example, one group noted the need to recognise that “Social status and different educational attainments can be perceived differently in different cultures and have real status in some cultures but less in others”. Gender differences may also affect the types of activities which work to build bridges between groups, and activities focusing on a particular gender can be helpful; e.g. women’s groups or projects for fathers and their children.

141. Conference participants determined that **belonging** can have various characteristics which can exist in different combinations. It can have elements which are objective and/or subjective (i.e. dependent on characteristics determined by others or oneself). It can be rooted in membership/affiliation at different levels, including feeling that you belong in a particular local area and/or country. There was also felt to be a need to “distinguish [between] belonging to a place [and] belonging to values and identities”. When seeking to build feelings of belonging, these are not necessarily the same, and hence there is a need to determine “to what should [a] migrant belong?” and be aware that this choice will affect the activities used.

142. At a national level, participants agreed that the factors explored in earlier sections of this report were crucial in creating the potential for feelings of belonging. These included the need for “basic language knowledge”, “right to vote in local elections”, “access to nationality”, increased “access to

rights/access to benefits” and promoting “zero tolerance to discrimination”/“victimisation of migrants”. Actions by political leaders such as “proactive initiatives by city mayors to contact migrants informing them of their entitlement and encouraging them to apply” can help relate objective policies to highly subjective feelings of belonging.

143. Many successful initiatives experienced by the participants had focused on belonging at a local level, at least in the first instance. One group stated “local level initiatives create a sense of local belonging which can be built on”. For example, steps taken to proactively “involve migrants in local activities of the ‘village’ [can send the] message to ‘residents’ that migrants are interested in their concerns” as well as sending the message to migrants that they are welcome to participate. Alongside this, “informal recognition of [the] value of migrants’ customs” and “formal recognition given to migrants’ religious clerics”/places of worship can help to send the message that these are valued as part of the diversity of the local community.

144. Participation and empowerment were seen as “integral elements/factors in creating feelings of belonging” which help “make migrants feel important” as well as building links. Devising “programmes that encourage migrants to participate” which are linked to clear “recognition of equality of treatment” can help to affirm this process; e.g. “‘awards’ for [the] completion of training programmes”. “Work on participation activities e.g. involving migrant parents in schools” can help connect these families with the wider community, as well as “start[ing] with children as early as possible”²⁸. Central to this participation process is the need to “create opportunities and inspire motivation (e.g. by listening to migrants and residents’ voices)”. Whatever activities are used, participants felt that it was important to “adapt contract[-oriented] methods to [the] reality of community; e.g. same migrant communities might be orally bonded and ignore written letters, therefore go out and speak to them” instead.

145. Ultimately, belonging was felt to be created within locally-experienced relationships, and hence it is crucial that processes which endeavour to create belonging do not result in migrants being “stranded in ghettos” where they only relate to each other. Using social policy to encourage neighbourhoods with a social and ethnic mix can be helpful, providing these neighbourhoods also have a diversity of relationships between local individuals and groups and are supported in the process of transition.

²⁸ One particular initiative that was mentioned as having supported this was the European Association of History Educators, which has promoted multi-perspective approaches to teaching history across Europe; see <http://www.euroclio.eu> for details.

146. Some participants felt that an important part of building this diversity of relationships within a community means that those involved have to “concentrate on working on shared futures rather than on shared past” experiences which could include historical marginalisation and discrimination. However, this was a contentious area. Whilst the importance of creating “shared futures” was widely agreed, there was considerable debate about whether the creation of shared futures necessitated an “open and public discussion” of those historical issues which emotively symbolise unjust past relationships (such as slavery). The debate which followed centred on questions of “should this take place or not? Does open discussion help or not?”, ultimately concluding that this “question [was] to be answered in terms of the contribution to create belonging – does denial help to resolve tensions?”. In many examples cited, the answer to this question was ‘no’, as historical (and current) injustices needed to be recognised as part of a contemporary process of healing, providing the historical hurts were not allowed to derail contemporary opportunities for building more peaceful and just relationships in the present. Overall, this was recognised to be a historical process which would take time, meaning that those involved had “not to be discouraged” and “be patient with [the] results”.

2. Developing shared values between migrants and receiving communities

147. In terms of the process of developing shared values between migrants and receiving communities, the Barcelona conference participants recognised two views which were held in tension with each other.

148. The first view started from the position that at a “state level: fundamental values are not negotiable on [an] ad hoc base, but have to be respected by everybody”. This means that “it is important to be clear which values are fundamental and which are open to debate”, including “what values are given to be negotiated and in which form?”. Consequently, there is a “crucial role [for] education of all ages/ social groups of migrants” in “those values which are considered fundamental”. Nevertheless, it is important that these values at a state level “make society safe for groups which disagree, under condition they still act within the constitutional framework” of “democratic procedure/legal procedure in democratic society”.

149. The second view started from the position that “values are more universal than we usually think”, and emphasised the importance of the “context for [the] creation of values: [taking into account] socio-economic and cultural differences”. This requires seeing the “evolution of (fundamental/

constitutional) values” as happening in an historical context which continues to develop through a “bottom-up approach to [the] definition of fundamental rights”. It is also important to note that the way in which “different values [can be] attached to different groups” is often done in a “stereotypical” way, resulting in perceptions of different values which may need to be revised upon greater dialogue.

150. The process of reconciling these different perspectives on collective values within a historic and political context is part of the wider dynamic process of development based on democratic citizenship. However, participants were also keen to emphasise the need to recognise “fundamental values in practice”, as distinct from just “legal recognition”. This included working through the implications of wider national and European frameworks within everyday encounters, as part of a broader debate on what is morally right or just in particular situations..

3. Recognising the role of one’s own identity within interactions

151. The concept of “multidimensional identity” was considered to “help understand complexities and to foster interaction” not just for those being encouraged to interact, but also for those who were encouraging this process to take place. The personal identity of a practitioner was seen as a “resource” which could help them build links with others and be “used to create trust” in some circumstances, although in other circumstances “unchangeable parts of identity can hinder interaction”.

152. Participants asked the question whether it was OK to bring personal identity into being a civil servant, concluding that “personal identity is important, but should be balanced by professionalism”. They recognised that “roles create expectations which can be difficult, [and which] can create pressure/conflict on an individual level”. Professional identities can involve multiple affiliations and accountabilities, which means “training is important” in helping practitioners to manage these. “Identity confidence helps in switching roles”, as does sharing with others the expectations that are inherent within different roles. Hiring diverse personnel, including those from different ethnic and migrant backgrounds, can help public agencies when they are involved in building interactions.

Phase 4: Addressing the challenges and dilemmas which may inhibit progress

153. Clearly, the discussion above has already highlighted multiple controversies, challenges and dilemmas which are provoked by the contexts and issues involved.

154. These have included challenges:

- a) at a individual level (e.g. whether a way can be found to integrate different aspects of our own identity, and challenge our own prejudice and fear of difference);
- b) at a community level (e.g. whether individuals and groups can find ways to relate to those who are different to themselves); and
- c) at national and international policy levels (e.g. in framing immigration and cohesion policies which respond to the complexity of the issues outlined).

155. Underlying these challenges are genuine ethical and philosophical dilemmas which have generated different frameworks concerning how societies should deal with diversity and difference (Parekh, 2006). There are particular dilemmas in terms of the degree to which particular controversial cultural/religious practices might be accommodated within different European countries, and if so, which ones and how (Parekh, 2006). National responses to these issues in Europe are often affected by their particular histories of immigration and the precise ways they have come to conceive of liberal democracy. These vary substantially between countries, on matters of religion in particular (see Levey and Modood's 2009 edited volume, especially the chapter by Casanova). When combined, these contested debates have often left practitioners confused and/or in a difficult position as they try to resolve potential tensions between concerns for integration, rights, diversity and addressing inequality in particular situations.

156. Despite existing policy efforts, those involved in these activities indicate a widespread dissatisfaction with the extent to which these issues are being resolved on the ground in particular in local areas. For example, Jandl (2007:182) notes that:

“[A] major theme that can be identified in the search for innovative migration policies is the demand for an unflattering recognition of the reality of current migration policy - the fact that migration policies fall far short of their ambitions while producing a whole range of undesired and unintended consequences.”

157. These unintended consequences can include situations where policies devised to address concerns in one sphere of integration policy can have negative effects in another sphere (Engbersen, 2003). For example, re-organising immigrant welfare services into a separate agency from that which supports the existing resident population may have these mixed effects. Creating a separate system or agency may be helpful if this is more able to take their particular needs into account, but it can also have the effect of segregating them from the wider population and even creating the perception that they receive ‘special treatment’ not available to the wider population. Other dilemmas can involve perceived clashes between agreed principles and values, such as rights to cultural recognition and expression versus equal treatment (and whether the latter should mean equality of opportunity, process or outcome). These reflect broader challenges in introducing an interculturalist approach in policy and practice (Salvadori, 1997). More mundane (but still significant) challenges include the practical hurdles of persuading people of the benefit of interacting with others, and how to create the right spaces and opportunities where this interaction is most likely to be positive in its outcomes (Orton, 2009).

158. Those who seek to resolve these issues in particular localities have to find ways of managing these issues, using responses which make sense in that particular political and cultural environment. In doing so, they have to recognise the holistic way in which both residents and migrants experience the issues concerned, including the psychological, social and political processes affecting them. They also need to listen to the stories and perspectives of those “peoples whose voices usually go unheard” in constructing more inclusive processes and narratives (Westin, 2008:5) .

159. As the previous phases have demonstrated, developing more meaningful and diverse interactions between migrants and existing local residents can significantly aid their participation, integration and empowerment. This paper has already begun to highlight some ingredients based on research which might help develop greater local interaction in practice. These have included:

- a) a supportive policy environment which promotes equality and two-way interaction;
- b) the creation of integrated spaces which support encounters, generating positive interaction in these which overcomes prejudice and enables those involved to learn from each other;
- c) using an understanding of hybrid identities and different types of relationships/networks to support this process by using diverse links between people to establish relationships based on things people have in common that allow exploration of difference in other respects.

160. Those running various innovative initiatives have already been using these principles, and sometimes combining two or more of them to achieve greater effect. These initiatives may have been developed in a trial and error way in response to particular local circumstances. Many of them draw on principles of community development, youth work, peace-building/conflict resolution, and/or informal social educational practice, as developed through varying traditions across Europe. These traditions have informed grassroots practice, but have not always achieved sustained policy prominence.

161. For example, studies have drawn together evidence of peace-building work involving young people in different parts of Europe (e.g. in Northern Ireland, see Harland, 2009; and in South East Europe, see Crownover, 2009). The contribution and challenges of community and youth work interventions to developing cross-community interactions in the UK have recently been noted (Orton, 2009), as have ways of engaging faith groups in this process (Furbey et al, 2006). Other studies have explored the contribution of faith-based diplomatic initiatives in building peace in areas of conflict or poor relations between social, ethnic and/or religious groups (e.g. see Johnston, 2003). What is notable about such initiatives is that they combine a strong value-based intervention into difficult and conflictual circumstances and use these values to develop a deeper engagement between the identities and values of those who are divided. These interventions have involved engaging closely with the inter-relationship between identity, culture and worldview in an integrated way, building connections on shared concerns, developing relationships of trust, affirming the equality as human beings of those involved and exploring connections between different values and worldviews.

162. The framework of intercultural dialogue (as developed in the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* by the Council of Europe, 2008) provides a detailed framework and recommendations for promoting this activity across a wide range of arenas. However, it is important to note that there may be a

subtle but important difference between dialogue-focused activity and more general activities/spaces which bring communities together and result in interaction of the type discussed in this paper. The principles in the White Paper can apply equally to both. However, activities which are specifically labelled as 'intercultural dialogue' may attract only those who are already interested in such activities. Activities which are devised to challenge prejudice may put people off from engaging in them because of the social stigma attached to being prejudiced. Supported low-key activities which bring different groups in a community together on other grounds (such as shared interests) may be more effective in reaching those who might otherwise avoid such interaction. Where these activities successfully include migrants and existing local residents, they can build bridges between them informally without making dialogue over their differences the primary initial point of the encounter. In terms of process, this fits much better with the theoretical principles identified earlier in this paper.

163. This is not to say that specific activities focused on intercultural dialogue are not helpful. Activities specifically focused on intercultural dialogue can provide important arenas for those who are interested from different communities to link up with each other, creating supportive networks and opportunities for deeper dialogue between those who wish to do this. This is crucial particularly in developing leaders of this sort of activity. The point here is that such activities may not reach those in the wider community who may be more resistant to interaction in the first place, limiting their potential impact. These concerns are recognised in Daley's (2007) local level case study, which found that communities in one local area of the UK "tended to keep within their comfort zones in terms of culture, religion and language and many participants seemed happy simply to feel safe", meaning that "tensions are swept under the carpet" (p.166). In such situations, local community-level projects (e.g. facilitating mediation) can be important in tackling the dilemmas and helping local communities to collectively work out their own solutions. However, the range of people engaged in this work, and the variety of practices they use, are an under-researched area of work. Despite a range of inter-group relations programmes being developed, many of the interventions they employ have received little systematic, comparative evaluation, which could help inform and develop the effectiveness of their work (Stephan and Stephan, 2005).

164. For those who engage in facilitating interaction, participation and empowerment at a grassroots level, research is beginning to show that this can present particular difficulties for the practitioners concerned. This is not unusual – there is a developed literature on the dilemmas facing practitioners working in local communities, including the ethical dimensions associated

with this work (see Banks, 2004). Practitioners working in local public bureaucracies and other agencies have developed a repertoire of their own strategies for managing the controversies and dilemmas they encounter when working with cultural/religious diversity more generally (e.g. Orton, 2007) or migration and integration more specifically. For example, Hagelund describes how diversity workers working with migrants in Norway use a range of:

- a) practical strategies (finding pragmatic solutions);
- b) pedagogical strategies (educating the migrants 'how society works here');
- c) authoritative strategies (resolving dilemmas using a hierarchy of values);
- d) delegation strategies (leaving it up to the client to make their own decision);
- e) non-interventionist strategies (leaving alone those things which may be better without intervention, or which would be too difficult to tackle).

165. These strategies vary considerably, both in their rationales and their effects, but their impact on the integration process can frequently be hidden in wider policy discourses. This can be exacerbated by discourses of 'political correctness', which can render particular problems or difficulties especially difficult to acknowledge or discuss (Orton 2008a; 2009).

166. Hagelund (2009:1) describes how studying the strategies and rationales used by workers is crucial in "understand[ing] what is going on when policies are translated into institutional practices ...[by] show[ing] how public sector employees are handling the everyday dilemmas that policy does not provide the solutions for." This need to understand practice rationales and dilemmas applies equally in relation to those who are working in other agencies within civil society or as volunteer local activists promoting positive interactions in their own area (who may include migrants themselves and other local residents).

167. This highlights the importance of providing support and training to people who are involved as facilitators or participants in promoting the empowerment, participation and integration of migrants. As Phase 2 above has already highlighted, cultural differences may lead to misunderstandings despite the best of intentions. In particular, those with limited experience of other cultures may not even be aware of the depth of ways in which their own understandings and responses are culturally conditioned. Even dimensions of cultural difference such as different orientations towards

individualism/collectivism can have profound implications for expectations in interpersonal and group interactions (Brislin, 1994). Experience from initiatives such as international exchange programmes²⁹ indicates that providing training input at appropriate stages to participants is crucial to their effectiveness (Cushner, 1994). Furthermore, providing support which helps people to reflect on and integrate their experiences, as well as to deal the emotional rollercoaster ride that these experiences can create, is significant in helping people to adjust to rather than reject intercultural learning (Cushner, 1994).

168. For practitioners in particular local communities who are building bridges between different identity groups, this highlights the importance of supporting their development as leaders in organisations and communities (Niessen and Schibel, 2004:36). Initial work in this area³⁰ suggests that training which includes opportunities to explore these issues in depth and which provides safe spaces for developing their own identities, values, vocational formation and ability to engage in reflective practice are important. This type of training can enable them to handle a reflexive use of their own and others' identities in building relationships across identity boundaries and develop their skills in enabling people to learn from each other (Orton, 2008a). In addition, they need sustained support and recognition (including funding where appropriate) to enable them to complete what can be a highly stressful, long term, local relationship building process (Orton, 2009).

169. Developing a robust array of relationships between activists/leaders in different communities, as well as those professionals who are working with them, can be a particularly helpful strategy. For example, initiatives such as Intercultural Communication and Leadership Schools³¹ have proved effective ways of enabling developing leaders to encounter each other. During such initiatives, participants can work through issues of intercultural engagement in a supported context, and go back into their own communities with the support of a network of other leaders in similar positions from diverse communities across a particular area or city. These leaders are then more able to undertake pre-interaction preparatory work in their home communities

²⁹ For example, Xuereb (2009:15) cites "the EU's commitment to cultural exchanges, initiatives and participation projects directed at young people. For example, between 2007 and 2013 the Commission plans to implement 40,000 such projects and involve 70,000 young people in voluntary schemes. This vast number of young people makes the potential socio-economic benefits to European society by combining cultural perspectives with an awareness of migration in Europe significant".

³⁰ This initial work builds on a strong evidence base arising from broader research into professional development in social welfare professions more generally; see Banks, 2004.

³¹ See <http://www.intercivilization.net/en/europe.php>.

and support each other in generating supportive spaces for interactions between their respective groups.

170. However, the evidence based on the nature of these challenges and dilemmas for practitioners at grassroots level is fairly slim, especially in a comparative European context. The initial ideas represented in this section are particularly patchy and localised, reflecting the nature of available literature on these issues. There is clearly a need to engage more critically with the experience of those who are dealing with these issues on a daily basis at a local level. The Barcelona conference provided an excellent opportunity to comparatively explore these challenges and dilemmas, in order to see what an analysis of them might add to our understanding of these pressing issues. It also offered an excellent opportunity to explore how the broader foundational elements laid out in this report might offer the potential for addressing them.

Perspectives from Practice

171. Framing the issues associated with the empowerment and integration of migrants through participation and interaction in the way outlined in this report so far provided the participants in the Barcelona conference with a useful framework for reflecting further on their practice. The final session of the conference gave participants the opportunity to share challenges and dilemmas affecting those who are trying to implement these processes in their own context, taking into account the realities of their own situation. The challenges and dilemmas which were shared provide an insight into those issues which may benefit from further policy, research, educational and practitioner attention in order to develop this debate and understanding further. They also provide a helpful summary of some key themes identified throughout the report where further innovation and critical comparison of initiatives taking place in different contexts could be helpful.

1. Motivation

172. Generating motivation for participation in activities which may lead to the empowerment and integration of migrants was one of the biggest dilemmas recognised throughout the conference.

173. In terms of interaction, this included how to motivate both sides to get in contact, to break down interaction barriers and to get over their initial opinions. For example, one participant recognised that challenges were created because “certain groups/communities seem to feel no need for interaction or even see it as a threat”. Another participant saw “the need for

interaction/shared identity” as a challenge within their own work because of the need to ask “who’s need is it?”.

174. In terms of empowerment, practitioners were concerned about “participants ‘giving up’ trying because they think it’s useless to try”. For example, one participant stated that some migrants have the view that “immigrants do not get a job in the Norwegian labour market, so it’s not worth trying” to get a job. Two participants recognised particular gender equality issues here in “getting both men and women involved in emancipation projects” and “convincing women that the experiences they have is important/relevant”. Informal educational approaches were being piloted in some programmes to reach groups which were more difficult to engage, such as the MIRA (“Migration, Integration, Reflection, Association”) project working with younger refugees in the Södertörn region of Sweden.

175. One conference participant highlighted a dilemma arising from the concept of empowerment itself, stating “Empowering people implies approaching them as ‘powerless’. Where is the turning point?”. This reflected a broader set of dilemmas recognised by at least two other participants. These dilemmas were based on the tension between (i) taking an approach based on changing “the structure [of the] welfare state vs. [(ii) taking an] individual approach (human aspect)” which focuses on supporting particular migrants (e.g. helping individual illiterate women find employment).

2. What should be the response to those who do not wish to be involved?

176. Participants highlighted several challenges and dilemmas which related to how they should respond to those migrants and/or local residents who did not wish to be involved in interaction or empowerment activity. For example, one participant recognised that “taboos, such as mental illness in [the] Iraqi community” can prevent some migrants accessing support because they are “not ready/willing to receive help”. Another participant asked “How do you reach out to migrants who do not want to be in your community?”, and a further participant raised questions about whether migrants or others in particular communities should ever be obligated or forced to interact. The focus for others was “how to inform and activate a group that is not interested in engagement” in terms of residents from the wider community, recognising that voluntary social activities in community groups involving sharing common interests offered particular potential in this regard.

3. Tackling stereotyping and dealing with emotions

177. A series of challenges and dilemmas were faced by participants that developed the issues concerning stereotyping and emotions further. The

initial challenge was phrased by one participant as being “how to deconstruct myths, prejudices and so on in public spaces? How to act when facts and figures (knowledge) are not enough to promote mutual understanding [and] achieve interaction?”. Underlying these questions was recognition of the important role of emotions, but involving these emotions within the process created its own challenges. For example, one participant faced challenges because “debating issues concerning integration and diversity often brings about emotions which form an obstacle for an open discussion”.

178. These attitudes and emotions are not always immediately apparent, creating further challenges. For example, despite the fact that policies seem to suggest equality and acknowledge the validity of alternative cultures, one participant found it a dilemma to deal with those who displayed “unspoken disrespect of migrant communities”. In these situations, “those who seek to empower migrants must overcome the obstacle of disrespect”, but this can be difficult when it is not verbally expressed. Another participant indicated that dealing with such situations is particularly difficult because “talking about the ‘tone’ of the debate often hinders talking about the content”.

179. Further dilemmas arose from the need to “address... problems in society in a credible and direct way [without] stereotyping and alienating certain groups, thus hindering these groups in playing their parts in solving these problems”. For example, another participant recognised a dilemma in “addressing processes of ghettoisation/deterioration of particular quarters without stigmatising these areas and the population who lives there, namely the migrants”.

4. Responding to the media and public debate

180. Participants faced particular dilemmas in promoting the empowerment and integration of migrants whilst operating in an environment which also included the “role of [the] media and political communication”. This was because “in the public debate [what] counts is what sounds hard and tough. Politicians can’t speak too soft in public. So as a policy maker it is an effort to make efficient policy sound hard and tough. But this also influences the [public] attitude towards migrants as being [a] problem.” As a result, participants faced difficulties “squaring political priorities (which are often shaped by public/media opinion) with the realities of delivering policies that genuinely promote integration.”

5. The difficulties of implementing policies

181. Numerous different dilemmas were faced by participants in implementing policies within this context. In the context of emerging or vague policies, the fact that “political guidelines [are] not yet set” can mean

that appropriate responses are unclear because “anything done can be ‘right’ or ‘wrong’”. Constantly-changing and unclear criteria in relation to immigration can make work within immigration offices exceptionally difficult. In this context, “allegations of harassment” from migrants against service providers can be difficult to deal with, because of the dilemma of “who to believe – ‘migrant’ worker or ‘host’ country worker? And how to proceed?”

182. As noted earlier, there can also be challenges in terms of the “division of responsibilities between state stakeholders in [the] migration sphere” and how to co-ordinate different contributions. This can be a particular challenge if a particular public body, such as a local government authority, does “not consider it important to support integration of migrants”. Based on a “lack of analysis of the situation of migrants”, they may underestimate the difficulties of this process and only start to become active when the situation becomes one of “crisis in coexistence”.

6. Mainstream or specialist services?

183. Even when public and other bodies are committed to work which empowers migrants and helps them to integrate, there remain significant questions concerning how best to organise it. A particular dilemma facing many of the participants was whether it was better to offer “tailored specific programmes for migrants” or focus on “mainstreaming intercultural policies or integration policies” which ensured existing services were adapted to meet all citizens’ (including migrants’) needs.

184. Participants recognised the need for specific services which can in some respects be tailored directly to migrants’ needs. For example, some recognised challenges because a “lack of [an] information pack for new arrivals” and a “lack of access to information” inhibited their empowerment and integration in the early stages of arriving into a country. Providing appropriate support during this transition process raised challenges of how to offer “participants in the introductory programme an individually adjusted programme tailored to their needs”.

185. However, the “practice of segregating migrants” in order to provide specific services was itself seen as a challenge by some practitioners. This was because “it causes resentment in the host population and does not help migrants to make the link with other communities”. This is particularly the case where “rights given to migrants often result in a perception by nationals that resources are being taken from them” or that migrants are receiving some benefits which they are not; e.g. any specialised “health, education and even free legal assistance” services which are provided to the migrants as part of

their integration support. In these situations, the package which is supposed to help empower and integrate the migrants may create resentment amongst the wider population which simultaneously inhibits the desired integration from taking place.³²

186. A related dilemma raised by two participants concerned whether it was appropriate to use “positive discrimination of some migrants [as] service users, in order to give them opportunities equal to people from host community?”, and if so, when and where? “Positive discrimination” did receive some strong criticism from one participant because “it widens the gap between [migrants] and [others] because the majority will have the feeling that privileges are given to the minority”; “It gives people the feeling that injustice is done to them”; and “it feeds the prejudice that the minorities have their job and position not because of their skills and competitions but because of their being a minority member”.

187. One difficulty at the heart of these debates was expressed by a participant in terms of the challenge that “those who may most need different services, courses or activities can often be the groups that are hardest to reach”. Providing specialised services to such groups make help to engage with those who would otherwise not be involved, but may have negative implications for social networking and wider interaction. Similar issues were applied by another participant to “minority schools”, who saw these as presenting a dilemma because they were “good for ethnic identity, negative for social networking / interaction”, with the dilemma being “how to achieve both?”.

7. To what extent should existing services, identities and expectations be adapted in light of migrants’ cultures and identities?

188. Several participants recognised that there were additional challenges and dilemmas in determining the extent to which existing services and expectations should be adapted in the light of migrants’ cultures and identities. For example, one participant asked “To what extent (and in what ways and for how long) should one be flexible with migrants in their process of fulfilling “rules”, learning the (host society) language, etc.?”. Another participant saw this somewhat differently, as a challenge “to find the right balance in each of [our] own activities in order to always have present the

³² In some situations, the *actual* level of services provided is less important than the level of support which the population may *perceive* to be given. The point here is that the provision of different segregated services to migrants and existing local residents provides a particularly fertile ground for rumours of ‘migrants receiving special treatment’ to circulate. The dilemma is exacerbated by the potential for integrated services to cause equal resentment, if local residents perceive those who have just arrived as being entitled to the same support as they are despite not having paid national taxes before. Public education campaigns about the actual entitlements of migrants may help address this, providing they don’t fall foul of the related dilemmas concerning the media and public debate indicated above.

recognition of the culture of “the other” and not fall in [to an] ethnocentric approach”. They also raised questions of how to create a shared identity in the longer term. Particularly challenging debates were recognised in terms of deciding “shall we accept head scarves in state-run schools?” and “shall we accept female genital mutilation in girls and circumcision in boys?”. These challenges highlight that the nature of adaptation remains highly controversial and approaches to dealing with these issues remain highly contested.

8. Securitisation and legality within migration flows

189. A further group of dilemmas arose for the conference participants in relation to the issues of legality within migration flows and their relationship to integration activity. When dealing with particular individuals, this can present a dilemma of whether “to treat a person as a victim (of trafficking) or as an illegal migrant?”. In addition, one participant indicated facing a dilemma in how the tightening of immigration policies can create “more irregularity” as people seek to circumvent restrictive systems. In addition, the presence of “illegal (or irregular) migrants” who are aiming to move on through a particular country were considered by one participant to present “both security and humanitarian” issues, especially if they repeatedly attempt to get through even when initially apprehended. Overall, this created dilemmas for participants in “how to convince states to facilitate migrant interaction, while not focusing only on migrants and not using the security discourse”, as this can unhelpfully stigmatise all migrants and undermines their potential to integrate.

9. Resources and sustainability

190. A final set of challenges and dilemmas related to resourcing and sustaining successful empowerment and interaction activities. Participants were concerned about the “non-sustainability of activities promoting interaction between migrants and host societies” and “not having enough resources (finance, time, persons/human)” which could mean “losing acceptance” from those involved before the process was completed. Funding that was provided by public authorities for integration activities was recognised as being important to promote a diverse range of civil society organisations, ensure that they had the capacity to be involved and support dialogue between them. However, participants also recognised dilemmas in distributing available funds for these activities. These funding-related dilemmas included “When granting funding to projects and initiatives: (i) too many good ones: you have to make a choice and can’t support all good ideas (ii) limited to 3-4 years: even if you want, you can’t finance every good idea for a long period; (iii) lack of evaluation” because money spent on an evaluation “can’t be spent on the project”. The competitive process many

public bodies adopt in response to these challenges can create competition between these groups rather than encouraging them to work together. These are significant challenges, especially given the complexity and long-term nature of the empowerment and integration process which has been emphasised throughout this report.

191. The process of reflecting on these challenges and dilemmas, and the broader concepts within this report, led the practitioners involved in the Barcelona conference to decide on particular actions that they would take within their own contexts. These have been included in the Appendix to illustrate the potential of this approach in informing positive actions which begin to help address these dilemmas in practice. This provides initial evidence that further research and reflection on these issues in a wider range of practice settings could help to develop responses which deepen integration in practice. The separate policy document (Orton, 2010) provides a companion volume which is designed to assist policy-makers and practitioners in exploring this approach within their own context. This is based on the analysis within this report, and provides a way of testing in a wider range of contexts whether reflecting on these dilemmas, challenges, issues and responses may provide a useful way forward.

Conclusion

192. This report has aimed to draw together a wide range of relevant concepts, evidence and literature which might help to identify foundation elements for an innovative approach to developing migrants' personal confidence and strengthening social cohesion. The discussion has explored the relationship between the themes of belonging, recognition, participation and interaction, considering both bonding and bridging elements. In the process, a phased process to building interaction, belonging and empowerment has been outlined which recognises the multi-faceted nature of identity and incorporates insights from a range of disciplines to help support this process. By recognising the experiences faced everyday by professionals and people living in local communities as they deal with these dynamics, this report has endeavoured to share these experiences and improve understanding of the issues that they face. By building on these foundations, there is significant potential to improve the empowerment, support the participation and deepen the integration of migrants in their interactions with local communities across Europe.

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³³ IMISCOE is 'a network of excellence on international migration, integration and social cohesion in Europe', funded by the European Commission, and based at the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, University of Amsterdam, with searchable resources available at <http://www.imiscoe.org/> .

³⁴ This is informed by a forthcoming publication, *Identity Processes and Dynamics in Multiethnic Europe*, edited by Westin et al, to be published by Amsterdam University Press.

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Appendix : Responses Generated from Barcelona Conference Participants as a Result of the Conference Reflections

- “1. Continue interfaith dialogue with different faiths; 2. Reach out to the working class white community and ask them what they would like to do.”
- “‘Bring back’ good experiences (examples from other countries).”
- “I was charmed by the idea of organising creative writing workshops for young people about the topic ‘what is your identity?’. It’d be a very interesting and potentially fruitful because it would show the wealth of identities we give ourselves.”
- “With economical problems, we should first prioritise 1. Vulnerable groups 2. Trafficked women. Work on legislative measures concerning citizenship, integration.”
- “To train members/leaders of migrant associations how to involve other migrants, manage stakeholders, implement planned activities, evaluate activities.”
- “Put a larger emphasis on systematically collecting experiences from different projects and activities and make them available to other integration stakeholders > share good and bad practice (maybe virtual) for learning.”
- “Stimulate to the creation of more local ‘immigrant councils’ to give the local authorities more feedback on what policies work and what are the needs of both communities.”
- “Simple actions related with so-called ‘civil religion’ rituals to express the willingness of receiving communities to integrate migrants and to promote their recognitions as members of the community.”
- “To start a project together with a diverse group of people to develop a local unifying identification without people having to give up their identity, like ‘Rotterdammen by choice’.”
- “To diversify the methods for promoting interaction on different levels including civil society in design of calls for proposal and other activities.”
- “Learn more from other experiences in Europe. We have to change the approach from migration issues to *diversity issues*!”
- “Contacting individual participants of the conference to collect practical activities to use in my project MIRA. Some examples that I have heard: ‘peer to peer educators’, ‘living museum’, ‘exchanges with other programmes and projects in Europe’, ‘Rotterdam by conviction’.”
- “Able to avoid some ‘pitfalls’ because of new theoretical backgrounds and exchange of experience with participants exercising the same fieldwork.”

- “Issues are financial/political priorities, training, support. What are the gains and how do we measure them?”
- “1. Dissemination of results of conference to member states of CoE; 2. Work at all levels; i.e. local, regional, national and international; 3. Co-operate with other international organisations, local councils like Barcelona.”
- “To promote/discuss the approach of interaction among my colleagues and the municipalities of the ... province. To make clear basic ideas.”
- “Spread ‘food for thought’, help to construct a political and social discourse on ‘equality and diversity’.”
- “An activity in which people are invited to ‘post’ some information about what makes them what they are – their roots and identity – on a website. People posting there should be a word limit of, say, 200 words. A ‘hidden’ field could reveal their ethnic origin once post is read.”
- “Interactive, creative, non-formal activities based on concepts of ‘living libraries’ or ‘living museums’ – exploring local culture and history – how to belong in that community. Arranged by local people with practical support from local administration.”
- “Encouraging a dialogue with migrants who already participate in activities of neighbourhood projects and trying to motivate them to collaborate, have active role in decision making.”
- “Applying a broader, more global approach to integration policy. Not thinking of challenges in terms of ‘migrant specific issues’ but in a sense that these issues are a concern for the society at large. And communicate this in a fashion in order to induce other people to think in a more global perspective as well. The Barcelona approach is very fruitful when it comes to this. It’s like changing the perspective from looking down from a tower to looking down from a satellite.”
- “Facilitating civil society/migrant organisations’ exchange of information on their practices – ‘newsletter on civic participation’.”
- “Inform NGOs on what went on at this conference.”
- “To review my current work with a view to integration of the results in my activities.”
- “Share learning with relevant networks and get to think about the issues and solutions (bringing people together event).”
- “Share this experience in the committee of ministers of CoE – explain that this is a priority area which has added value and deserves follow up and funding.”
- “Improve activities directed to the integration of refugees both in policy development and its implementation levels.”

- “To support immigrants (refugees) in process of integration through explanation how important it is to be independent and responsible (skills, language, education, etc.).”
- “[Promote] interaction and exchange between all stakeholders involved in integration process > identifying problems and rectifying them through co-operation; systems of co-operation and exchange.”
- “I conclude or take out we have to continue our work and create spaces not only to have this discussion with so different roles but meet and work together in the same direction. When you share experience [you] enrich the knowledge. Share with colleagues what I’ve learnt in these 2 days.”
- “Assisting people in using ‘the dilemma’ in participating in public debate as a starting point. Write an article about it myself.”
- “Research? Colleagues/representatives of different groups go to the ... town hall, do some kind of needs assessment of Dutch people – which problems do you encounter with migrants, which ‘assistance’ could you use, e.g. writing down experiences, sharing with colleagues, and asking them for ideas.”
- “Get ready to start project ... in January 2010.”
- “To strengthen the discussion regarding to the sense of integration (in the time of economic crisis) on the level of practicalities.”
- “Have my colleagues and other policy makers in (for instance) municipalities [to] participate in the ‘Day of the Dialogue’ next year to meet migrants in a different context.”
- “Partager avec l’équipe du Service de l’immigration de la mairie tout ce qu’il s’est passé à la conférence pour qu’ils aient aussi un regard et une connaissance des autres et non pas seulement de leur ville/leur quotidien.”
(Share with the Town Hall Immigration Department Team everything that has taken place at the conference in order that they also have a view and knowledge of others and not just of their city/their daily life).